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A DEFENSE OF LIBERTY

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BY

THE HON. OLIVER BRETT

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To

MY WIFE

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A DEFENSE OF LIBERTY

A DEFENSE OF LIBERTY

A PROLOGUE OF MODERN REFLECTIONS

I

THE statue of Liberty in New York Harbor is a somewhat trite object of contemplation. Both the cynic and the idealist have used that gigantic image to fill the gaps of many a moral tale and idle platitude. Its magnificent position, its ironic proximity to the marvelous metropolis of modern commerce, its embodiment of the ideas of Jefferson and Rousseau are so compelling a combination that I do not see how that dominating figure can fail to stir the pulses or quicken the imagination. Great is Diana of the Ephesians. It pleases men to solidify their ideals. The world is strewn with the frozen memorials of this desire, the desire for definite and unchangeable standards, the desire to record once and for all that this and no other is what we believe, and shall always believe. And, as in the case of Ozymandias, "nothing beside remains." It is a sad reflection that this passage of an ideal from the

heart into the hands of men is a process of decay, and that what we see about us, familiar and accustomed, we forget to feel, just as men forget to love their wives. France was the birthplace of this the youngest of human hopes, and her public buildings are blazoned with the message of liberty, equality, and fraternity. It can, I think, be said that during the hundred and fifty years in which human endeavor has worked for these ideals, France has obtained a high standard of equality, but very little liberty or fraternity, England a high standard of liberty and very little equality or fraternity, America a high standard of fraternity, and very little liberty or equality. Perhaps the stony soil of modern industrialism has been unkind to the delicate plant of liberty. But modern industrialism is only a new name for a very old disease. The power of gold is no new phenomenon; the obscure writers of the Nibelungen legend knew all about it, and it was an easy task for Mr. Bernard Shaw to link up Alberich with Rockefeller across the centuries. The thinkers may think and the dreamers may dream, but the sure instincts of men know well enough that, except in rare cases of intellectual detachment, it is impossible to be free unless you possess a measure of wealth. The Greek and Roman Republics, built like palaces on wooden piles of slave labor; the troubadours and knights of feudalism, the flower of chivalry with its roots in serfdom; the landed aristocracy based on the toil of Hodge; the com-

mercial plutocracy based on the poverty of the wage-earners; Pericles, Mæcenas, Richard Cœur de Lion, Horace Walpole, Andrew Carnegie emerge from the common herd into the light of history and owe their personalities and freedom to their independent income. Philosophy and ethics will dispute it, but the hard facts and experience of life prove that "the pursuit of happiness" which Jefferson so proudly claimed as the right of all men in the new-born American Republic means little else but the "pursuit of wealth." From Plato to Maeterlinck the intellectuals have discussed the plumage of the blue bird of happiness, but common men have always known that happiness for them means just the health that comes from good food and clean surroundings, a modicum of leisure, and the power to buy things, to lay up a little store of personal possessions. Put in the term of these desires the pursuit of wealth is neither sordid nor unnatural; and it ceases to be cynical to say that wealth is the main ingredient of freedom. We must not be hypnotized by words. Out of the confusion of modern political and social thought two or three salient facts emerge. If we divide up the present wealth of the world—and that is the natural effort of the poor—we shall not all be rich and happy; we shall all be poor and unhappy. If we destroy wealth we destroy what we ourselves desire, and should possess. The dirty work of the world has got to be done by some one. As I lie lazily in my deck-chair and look out

over the blue Atlantic shimmering in the May sunlight, I know that someone sweltering beneath my feet has got to stoke the *Aquitania*, and that no social theory has yet evolved a method of avoiding such abominable toil. No doubt solutions to these problems will be found. Science will some day take the place of our slaves, and production so increase that there is enough wealth for all.

In the meantime the students of sociology are busy redistributing the miserable pittance that is called the wealth of the world, and the masses are bitterly arguing about the size of their share of that pittance. Indeed a pathetic spectacle.

II

The Child is father of the Man, and perhaps the only thing that makes us interesting is the subconscious memory of the transitional stages that have marked our personalities from youth to age. The imprint of what we were is never completely erased by what we are, and this is as true of the nation as of the individual. In England, even during the high flood of the industrial plutocracy, during the Victorian days when its excellence as a system was unquestioned, and when it stood for the consummation of civilization and progress, the older phases of political and social thought still lingered in the by-ways of national life and shaded the fierce sun-

light of that modernity. Any ideal that has once definitely permeated society remains for ever an ingredient of its social life. Those who know England well and understand her historical personality can easily detect to-day the traces of the feudal system, of the Catholic Church, of the Puritans, and naturally of the recently disinherited landed aristocracy, influences that have softened the supremacy of the industrial plutocracy, and that have made its pretensions to permanent superiority more absurd and less irksome. England is full of people still believing in and still trying to live according to old systems long discarded by the majority. This not only makes for tolerance; it has the more important effect of rendering uneasy on their temporary thrones the powers that be, but may not be to-morrow.

In America it is different. The traditions that make men cynical or tender, the memories of many a creed that seemed divine, and many a system that seemed perfection, gone to seed in failure and disillusion, are there no guide to wisdom. The continuity of social effort that links Mr. Smillie not only with Wilkes but with Wat Tyler and even Simon de Montfort does not exist. Since America became a nation the industrial plutocracy has been supreme, and those who love it cannot conceive any reservation to or hesitation in their belief, and those who hate it detest it with untempered zeal. To them industrial plutocracy is not a phase, a

temporary phenomenon in the march of human history. "Business" has taken complete possession of the soul of the people in a way that is almost inconceivable to the more illogical and much lazier English. Business is the sole occupation of the nation, and so absorbed in it are they that it has altered in a peculiar way their social problems and political outlook. In America the rich are not idle; they do not even want to be idle. That accusation of idleness so familiar to us in political argument, so fundamental in its indication of what we are and what we wish to be, cannot be made by the American poor against the American rich. We who work to live, whose main effort is towards escape from toil into a life of ample leisure, whose main quarrel with the rich is not that they have too much of these things, but that we have too little, can hardly conceive a plutocracy in which the plutocrats do not desire leisure, and live laborious days because they love them.

This genuine love of work is characteristic of all classes of the community. The familiar sight of the wives of rich Americans traveling luxuriously in Europe without their husbands has given rise to a legend amongst us that the American business man is a henpecked slave, toiling year in, year out, to provide the pleasures of his female relations. It is an illusion. The truth is that nothing will induce the business man to leave his business. He is bored to death in Europe, and he cannot believe that any pleas-

ure his wife obtains from spending his income comes within a thousand miles of the pleasure that he obtains from making it. His holiday and his sport are no real delight to him; they are not, as they are with us, the eagerly anticipated and greedily enjoyed emblems of real existence. On the contrary, they are to him merely a medicine, necessary, like food and sleep, to keep him fit for the business life. I know a rich man over seventy years old, the possessor of four houses, a yacht, and eight motors, who can hardly be forced to take a fortnight's holiday in the year. He cannot be persuaded to eat a good lunch five minutes' walk from his office, because he can save time by eating a bad one in his own street. And every summer morning at eight o'clock his yacht, to us the symbol of expensive pleasure, joins the crowd of other rich yachtsmen on the waterways that lead to the city of New York. This adoration of the strenuous life would seem fantastic both to rich and poor in England. Yet we must not rashly assume that it is derived from mere love of money. On the contrary, love of money, safely invested money, is far more prevalent in England. It is the absorbing fascination of the game, the splendid results to be obtained from his endeavor in that wide undeveloped country that calls the rich man to his office in the sweltering summer days. And in America the same spirit permeates the poor. The agitation for shorter hours is not in America bound up with the hatred of intolerable toil, or the

desire for leisure and recreation, it is merely a wish to lessen the number of hours before which overtime pay comes into operation, and is in reality an offshoot of the agitation for higher wages. The whole nation is united in the enjoyment of its effort to extract wealth, and the power that wealth brings, from life, and from that novel angle they view the social problems of the age.

Idleness being ruled out, the discussion between those who work with their brains and those who work with their hands is almost entirely concerned with relative reward. Liberal thinkers belonging to the educated classes are willing to surrender several positions of the capitalist case. They agree that the element of luck, whether it takes the form of inheritance or of speculation, cannot be defended. But they maintain that real brains, genuine business ability is a rare gift, and can never be on an absolute level with manual labor. The man who develops a country, who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before, who has the quality of inspiration and the capacity to organize, deserves a higher reward than do the mere instruments that carry out his ideas. The manual workers agree that this is so, but that the brain-worker's reward is disproportionate. The brain-worker replies that only a disproportionate reward is sufficient to make an incentive. These are the higher levels of social science, and the argument deteriorates in practice into angry disputes concerning

the size of the wage-bill that a particualr business will carry, and whether men who insist on taking most of the profits can justly refuse to share the losses. The acerbity of the quarrel is somewhat increased by the fact that the modern Government, however radical and advanced, is financially dependent on the class from whom all taxes are drawn. So among ordinary men the ancient struggle for the golden eggs continues; while, above them, some say that the indispensable goose is very sick and may die, and others say that the goose is not indispensable, and that is doesn't matter whether it dies or not.

The ratio of reward that will be just to the brain-worker and that will form an incentive to his endeavor may seem to us a point of difference too minute to justify the hurling of the smallest bomb. Our own problems are so infinitely complicated by the deep lines of ancient class distinction, by the habits and traditions of a society that knows better how to play than how to work. Yet on the whole the danger of social disruption seems greater in America than in England. We are always ready for the inevitable compromise, perhaps because we do not feel so strongly, and because we have from old experience no very great belief either that the present system is so bad as it is painted, or that any new one will produce the millennium. The classes may be very distinct in England, but they understand each other well, and the traditions

that bind them together are stronger than the problems that divide them. But in the American melting-pot the temperature is always at boiling-point. The melting-pot is in reality too intimate a simile for so volcanic a social experiment. The energy and vitality of a people that has no social or political memories naturally tends to violent explosions. Both rich and poor are sure that they are right—sure with a certainty and with an uncompromising determination that the English have never felt, and that their easy-going, skeptical temperament is incapable of feeling. Superficially the rich in America have a better case than they have in England. They are more useful, more efficient, and they appear to fill a necessary function in the scheme of modern civilization. But they are not so human or so kindly. They live lives far more selfish and detached. And they look upon the poor, not as those whom we have always with us, but merely as those who have failed. Hence the hatred they excite is far deeper than it is with us. Human beings do not relish the feeling that it is their own stupidity that has kept them poor, and they take refuge in the belief that the rich man must have cheated, that certain qualities of trickery and cunning are the foundations of prosperity. And indeed it may be so. But it is curious to find that the more the rich man justifies his existence by his industry the more intolerable he becomes to the poor.

III

As Hamlet noticed, there is something very discouraging about mankind. The world is quite satisfactory as long as you merely live in it and enjoy yourself when you can. But if you have ideas about it, if you are born to set it right as Mr. Wells is, if you can't bear it to be untidy, to be permanently muddled and immoral, then Job himself could more easily be comforted. I do not object so much to the obtuseness of my companions in this battered caravanserai; that defect can in some moods be twisted into a convenient and flattering foil to my own superior vision. And in any case, in more modest moments, it is natural that they should not know why we are here and where we are going or ought to go, since even I myself have no idea what is the answer to these conundrums. No, it is not their obtuseness, it is their slackness, their lack of interest in general questions, their inability to maintain their intermittent enthusiasms that drives one to despair. It is true that the intellectuals are often wrong, but the faith, the vital energy that moves them would, if all men could be fashioned so, solve most of the problems that trouble these tiresome times. It is natural that people should be selfish, but they seem to be unable even to harness their own selfishness for any useful purpose, and th powerful force of enlightened self-interest is lost because it is never sustained for any length of time.

It is possible that democracy may be a failure. Certainly it is not a final form. In feudal times there were weak kings. Men who lacked energy, determination, and force of character, men who loved pleasure and wasted their vitality on wine and women and song, sat doggedly on their thrones and hung up the progress of mankind. But there were also strong kings, who hustled and struggled and got things done. Democracy, on the other hand, is always weak. Its essence is the idea of "majority" rule, and the majority of mankind, although just as likely to be right as wrong in their beliefs and desires, are always certain to be indifferent and unstable. It is not necessary to be Aristotle to know that the first axiom of Politics is that those who have the power must do the governing themselves, and not be led by the nose. Yet Philip II in the grip of the Inquisition and Louis XV in the arms of Madame de Pompadour were free agents compared with the secret bondage in which Democracy is fettered. Like any dissipated king, the people toy with their mistresses and forget the duties of their high estate; but those who lead them by the nose have deteriorated in type, from Cardinal Richelieu to Mr. Bottomley. The feeble king, too, was aware that he had delegated his authority into hands stronger than his own. But the Democracy is merely deceived; it has the illusion of authority, and is not conscious of the secret cunning of the usurper.

There is, of course, nothing to be said for the dis-

carded monarchical form of Government. It is a sign of helpless pessimism to be sentimental about the past, to lay inordinate stress upon the merits of dead ideas and to forget the faults that made them obsolete. But the past throws up just as dangerous a mirage before the eyes of those who hate it as of those who love it, and much of the blind adoration of the present is derived from too constantly making a favorable comparison with the past. Those who have fought for Democracy, who are accustomed to look back to the traditional forms of thought as the enemies of their cause, cannot be blamed for their blind belief in the purity of what they have obtained. But this setting up of our attained ambitions as if they were the ark of the covenant is a form of vanity which delays the progress of mankind. We have to make up our minds that though whatever we have done may be good and a thousand times worth doing, it is only a step forward leading to the next, and that any attempt of ours to prove it the summit of the mountain will be but a hindrance to those that climb.

The Greek philosophers placed Politics on the same plane as Ethics. Surely that sentence alone should be enough to rouse our Democracy from its lethargic optimism. Granted that Spanish priests and Roman priests did in the past organize the ritual of belief into a corrupt system that made necessary the Reformation, yet never in history has Ethics reached so low an ebb in the

minds of men as Politics has to-day. In America high-minded men of the educated classes, with rare exceptions, refuse to touch politics and maintain that no honest man can make it his profession. Business and trade, hardly one would have thought temples of purity, at any rate give a man the choice between good and evil. In American politics there is no such choice, and men use the phrase "a mere politician" with the same contempt as they would about a thief. The game is thus left in the hands of those who are not ashamed to play it. A difficult but dirty game, requiring certain qualities of low cunning, audacity, unscrupulousness, and hypocrisy. They are out for themselves, these men; they control the machine; and behind them is the influence of all that is most selfish and cynically materialistic in the community.

The party system in America, pretending to be the genuine expression of alternative ideals, merely gives the people an illusion of choice between two evils. Both parties are organized gangs, made up of men of low character thoroughly conversant with the power that such organization gives for the attainment of wealth and position. The tongue and the pen are the cog-wheels of the machine. A masterly camouflage of spoken morality is daubed over the grim reality of corruption. Side by side with this misuse of speech they wield the skillful propaganda of the press. The vast pretense of independent opinion; the one ventriloquist

voice hidden in a babel of calculated noise; the elaborate suppression of facts and doctoring of news to suit a secret policy; the impressive and dictatorial tone of wisdom assumed by the anonymous; has been created under the shadow of that ancient battle-cry "the freedom of the Press."

Within the shelter of these devices the power given by Democracy is used for certain definite objects. Speaking broadly, we may say that those who are anxious to get rich are as a rule in league with those who are anxious to remain rich to deceive the rest of the population. But some slight difference of opinion as to the best method of performing the operation of getting rich still divides the political world into two parties. One party of politicians thinks it is best to cling to the financiers, to assist big business, to fight trade wars, to manipulate tariffs and keep labor cheap, because in the process they can pick up the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table. The other party of politicians thinks it more profitable to flatter the poor with the promise of radical reforms and to assist by every means the socialistic tendencies of the time, because every step towards State ownership, every increase in complicated taxation, every law that interferes with the liberty of the individual, brings with it lucrative bureaucratic jobs, comfortable salaried positions. According to temperament some men prefer the latter party because it brings power as well as wealth, and eliminates the middleman

financier. Others prefer the former party because it is easier and safer to let the middleman financier do the work and incur the hatred. But both parties are aware of the game they are playing, and are agreed that it must never be exposed.

America is a more Conservative country than England, and the processes we have been studying are correspondingly more evident. But English democracy has progressed sufficiently far in its journey towards Conservative organization to enable it to discover in its own body politic the destructive germs of the same disease. The deterioration in the type of politician, and the refusal of decent men to enter political life; the base uses to which the press and the platform have been put; the revival of the desire for tariffs and the enormous increase in the staff of the bureaucracy are evident signs of democratic corruption. When we are once aware of the tricks that are being played upon us, and for what material gains our ideals of government are being used, it should not be difficult to cut away the poisoned growth. But we sleep, as an elm sleeps, with the ivy round its trunk.

IV

Humanity, observed from the height of the Woolworth Building, the highest office building in the world, more than retains its hackneyed resemblance to an ant-

heap. Mr. Woolworth himself was a typical product of America, a country of extremes and superlatives. He made a large fortune out of selling things at the fixed price of sixpence, and his sixty-storied building is at once the pride and the advertisement of his career. From the time of the Pyramids such men have asked us to look upon their works with despair, and always this particular form of vanity, far from magnifying the greatness of man, has only increased the impression of his impotence. Looking down on the builders of this fantastic but beautiful city of New York they seem puny insects enough, rushing hither and thither for no obvious purpose, their white straw hats shining under the hot sun. A hustling confusion always seems to be going on in the ant-heap, and the serene observer finds himself asking the unanswerable and ancient questions: Is there a purpose behind this confusion? Are they moved by reason or by instinct? Are they working for results, and if so, are the results they are working for worth having?

And when we descend from the observatory we find their confusion is indeed genuine—a confusion both of effort and mind. They cannot even decide whether Mr. Woolworth himself was admirable or detestable. A thousand unsolved social problems cluster round the person and career of Mr. Woolworth. He was the product of capitalism, of course; no socialistic state with its lack of incentive could have produced him or

his ideas. But then was he worth producing, and do we want his ideas? He started from the bottom of the industrial ladder, failed, and was ruined several times. He worked very hard; he was no idle dabbler in high finance, born in the capitalist purple. And he claimed to be providing people with things they really wanted for the absurd sum of ten cents. But do we want his articles? Or do we only buy them because his expensive system of advertisement tells us we do? And behind this self-made man lie all the ramifications of the industrial system. Questions of wages and the right to work; questions of hours and the right to have leisure; all the poverty and misery of the submerged cling about the cloven foot of Mr. Woolworth as he rises to the prosperous surface of the social system. Yet we cannot be sure that we can get on without Mr. Woolworth, however much we should like to get on without him. We cannot be sure that the State will think it worth while to provide us with little articles for ten cents. And even if it does, will not those bored bureaucrats on fixed salaries muddle away the profit that Mr. Woolworth used to make? That glittering fortune of his, that seemed so large to him and to us, what will become of it, and how far will it go, if we alter the system by which he made it, and by which we too are so desperately trying to imitate him? We cannot be sure that the bureaucrats will be efficient or honest enough to let it come to us in wages, or, if they are, that the fortune is

large enough to make a noticeable difference to those wages. The State may calmly announce that the little articles will be twenty cents in future, and then we shall require more wages to buy them. And then there is the Tower. For, like children, we are just as proud of the Tower as ever Mr. Woolworth was. We know that it would be a sad world if nobody built towers in it. It is a foolish Tower; no State would dream of erecting such a thing. But the straw-hatted ants would miss it if it were not there.

We are in a fog in these days; it is the keynote of our century, but so uniform is its density that the majority imagine it to be the daylight. Some of us who were born amid the regulated certainties of the reign of Queen Victoria are more quick to feel the miasma of the atmosphere. Most writers and thinkers are aware of this mist of the mind, are aware that they cannot see a yard in front of their noses, but they are full of a Shavian confidence that they can find the way home. Mr. Wells alone in *Tono Bungay* and *The New Machiavelli* has drawn the fogginess of the age, but latterly even he has lit up his lantern and asked us to follow on. And we are reluctant to follow anybody; we only stand in little groups at the cross-roads and argue whether to turn to the right or the left.

Mr. Woolworth is asked to prove that he is admirable and he cannot do it. It is far easier for us to prove that he is detestable. But we have to prove more than that.

We have to prove that he is more detestable than the gentleman we are going to put in his place. He failed so often. Can the element of risk be eliminated? Is it a good thing that it should be? Will the State ever take a risk? It would be interesting to know whether Mr. Arnold Bennett believes that a State publisher would have ever printed *The Pretty Lady*, or whether the editor of the *Manchester Guardian* believes that a State Press would ever print articles that advocated Anarchy. We want to be sure that the ground is firm on which we are asked to walk. We want to know whether there are any unchangeable laws that govern politics and economics.

Two concrete problems, one political and the other economic, have lately been disturbing the minds of the American people. The political one is the question of Prohibition. Let us at once count out of the controversy the obvious and ignoble elements on both sides—that is to say, the vicious who love to drink and the virtuous who love to deprive people of pleasures that they are not tempted by themselves. Neither of these types has decided or really influenced the question of Prohibition. It is a far deeper and more subtle division of opinion. One side say that alcohol is a poison that not only destroys the individual and damages the health of his children, but also vitally affects the efficiency of the community. Millionaires and Socialists are found at one on this point. Irrefutable figures have

been produced to prove that Monday is a day's work lost to the community, and that 30 per cent. increase of output will be the result of Prohibition. Business men calculate that a country adopting Prohibition will inevitably defeat in commerce and trade a country that does not. The other side admit every word of this, but maintain that only in excess is alcohol a danger, that people can be educated to moderation; and that any attempt to prohibit its use is a gross interference with personal liberty. We must be careful before we dismiss that plea for personal liberty. Many a discredited and intolerable form of Government has ignored it for reasons of expediency and profit. One of the counts against Prussia itself was that it placed the efficiency of the State before every other human motive. We have gone already far in the curtailment of personal liberty. It may be true that this is only one more step, but how far are we to go? Shall the State tell us whom we are to marry and how many children we are to have? We want the fog cleared away, definite laws discovered and laid down.

The economic problem is concerned with the taking over by the State of the railway system during the war. The story is a simple one. To obtain unity of control and to obviate competition the State took over the railways during the war. The business men, probably correctly enough, were considered unable to dispossess themselves, for national purposes, of their habit of

working for dividends, and the management was placed entirely in the hands of the bureaucracy at Washington. The bureaucracy, concentrating on the war, found itself at loggerheads with the railway union. Its position was a particularly weak one, for it not only was handicapped by its desire to win the war, but also by its political disinclination to alienate votes. It therefore gave way at once to every demand for higher wages and shorter hours. The result being that, at the end of the war, not only were these magnificent properties not earning dividends, but they were in many cases being run at an actual loss. The problem was complicated by several other factors. The bonds of American railway companies are very widely held as investments for the savings of comparatively poor people all over the United States. The higher wages made it absolutely necessary to put up the cost of freights, which is always reflected in every other business, and puts up the cost of living to the rest of the population. The shorter hours made it necessary to employ more men on the railways, which increased the labor shortage in other industries and decreased the general output of the country.

Faced with these difficulties the State has decided to hand back the railways to the companies. But the problem remains. One side consider it to be a conclusive argument against State-ownership. The other side maintain that a state of war is no fair time to

test such an experiment. Once again we want the fog cleared away, definite laws discovered and laid down.

So men stand at the cross-roads arguing in the fog, much to the annoyance of those who have lanterns and wish us to follow their lead in one direction or another. The Americans are a cautious nation, and they do not care much for social experiment. They have attempted very little municipal trading, and very few general services are in the hands of the State, because they are not convinced that socialized industry run by their corrupt politicians will be an improvement on capitalism. They have been convinced that Prohibition will be a success, and they have adopted it completely and without compensation. The English are not like that. They enjoy social experiment, but are quite ready to pay the vested interest for the right to make it. They hate to leap to a logical conclusion, and they are hardly ever absolutely convinced about anything. They always like to retain as many of the old bottles as will consent to be filled with the new wine. But though nations may differ in temperament as England and America do, all modern communities are afraid of chaos. It is not the atrocities but the economic failure of the Bolsheviks that counts against them. Civilization in the West is so advanced now that even the worst-off amongst us has got something to lose. It is easy enough to boil us up into a hatred of Mr. Woolworth, but you have got to

prove to us that Mr. Tadpole and Mr. Taper will be able to build us that wonderful Tower.

V

The political chaos of our time has been largely increased by the fog of war. We can clearly discern that the outstanding effect of Armageddon must be a vast increase in the Anglo-Saxon influence upon the world. England and America combine between them all the most modern developments of that form of Government that we call Democracy. The political tendencies of those related yet diverse communities will be a pattern which the world will imitate. It is of great importance, therefore, that each of them should endeavor to clear away as far as possible everything that obscures their political vision and prevents them from discovering whither they are going and ought to go. The stranger in America is naturally more aware of the fog than those who live in it and have grown accustomed to its density. The chaotic sensation of purposeless wandering in the mist of philosophical phrases and social ignorance that overwhelms one as a visitor to America, prompts one to look with a more critical eye upon the England one has left. The same problems obscured by the same doubts and difficulties disturb the surface of English life; only a different past and a difference of outlook and temperament have created in England a superficial alteration

in the impetus and range of evolution. The problems of Democracy are more near to solution in England than in America. The English, being less revolutionary and less corrupt, are more advanced. But the very fact that we are nearer to the vortex of inevitable change makes us more liable to error. The very fact that our political decisions are of supreme importance increases the fog in which we live, and makes it more difficult to find the narrow way. The political condition of England, therefore, is of vital interest not only to us, but also to those nations, like America, who will presently approach the stage that we have reached.

The outstanding fact in English political life produced by the war is the destruction of the Liberal party. War is nearly always fatal to Liberalism, since it is the antithesis of its fundamental ideas. There is nothing surprising, therefore, in the fact that this, the greatest of all wars, should have involved the temporary disappearance of Liberalism. But the new factor in the situation is the widely propagated idea that the eclipse of Liberalism is final, and that the need for its existence has passed away. The interests of many powerful forces are concerned in the support of this fallacy. The old Conservative Party is foolishly elated at the discomfiture of its ancient rival, oblivious of the fact that the field is thus left clear for Labor as the only alternative administration. The new Labor Party is naturally not averse to the removal of a rival that was apt to steal its

thunder, and that provided an alternative method of reform to its own. Mr. Lloyd George and the secret gang that surround him were delighted at the disappearance of a party that would have made it difficult for them to upset the traditional balance of the constitution and to organize in its place government by wizards, private secretaries, bureaucrats, and business men. Mr. Lloyd George has failed to "make good," as the Americans say, and the old Conservative Party, brought face to face with Labor, has discovered its mistake. But enough still remains of these ideas to persuade the minds of many that there is no need for Liberalism, since it is synonymous with Labor. Broadly speaking, we may say that the conception is that the right wing of Liberalism may just as well fall back into the arms of what is becoming a very moderate Conservative party, and that the left wing may just as well go forward into the ranks of Labor, since the latter is endeavoring to obtain the very changes that that left wing desires. It is the object of these pages to show that such a conception is a false reading of the tendencies of Democracy. The need for Liberalism is eternal, and it is on the contrary the Labor Party that is an artificial and temporary structure. Its right wing may just as well adhere to Liberalism; its left, or Socialist, wing is Conservative and reactionary. It is this false conception of the relative positions in politics of Liberalism and Labor that we propose to study.

CHAPTER I

NEW WORLDS FOR OLD

It is only lately that the Government of England has fallen into the hands of the uneducated. There was in English political life a certain tradition of cultivation; it was neither profound nor professional, being the product of Oxford rather than of Göttingen; but it was sufficient to enable our politicians to avoid the more blatant forms of vulgarity, sentimentality, and superstition.

The Prussian doctrine of efficiency frightened us out of what may be called our Etonian instinct for "good form," and we hastened to modernize and Germanize our institutions by placing them in the energetic hands of tactless middle-class business men. It is not surprising that such men, groping in a fog of unforeseen and inexplicable events, endeavor to mitigate our impatience by lighting little torches of borrowed wisdom and loudly asserting that they are leading us towards the light. The tag-ends of misapplied philosophy, the reactionary origins of which they are completely unaware, are presented to us as the complete fabric of

knowledge. In such fashion we are told that the old world has passed away under the stress of war, and that a new one is about to spring fully-armed from the brains of the Welsh wizard. Aladdin, assisted by Sir Eric and Sir Auckland, the twin genii of the lamp, is going to build us overnight, not anything so humdrum as a cottage, but the brand-new palace of a new world. The modern Nero, who found civilization made of brick, is going to take advantage of a late unfortunate conflagration and build it up again of marble. Rousseau is, of course, the uneugenic parent of this intellectual sophistry; he loved to leave the sickly offspring of his brain on the doorstep of posterity, to be picked up and nursed, like cuckoos in the social nest, by the Karl Marxs and Lloyd Georges that came after him. The idea that the world was, or ever could be, a schoolboy's slate washed clean for any fool to write upon, might seem to have been exploded by the bloodthirsty actions of the Committee of Public Safety during the Terror. But it was a temptation to Karl Marx to maintain the existence of the clean slate, and putting the blame on Robespierre for what he wrote upon it, to cover it with his own oracular conceptions. Mr. Lloyd George appears to share these philosophic delusions, though he is probably ignorant of their origin. Such half-baked notions appeal to that love which men have for a fresh start, which prompts them at the end of the month to cook their accounts and draw the double lines of finality

beneath a fraudulent balance. They like to believe that on some definite 31st of December they can cut themselves free from the ignoble and harassing past and begin a new life under the ægis of carefully tabulated resolutions.

The kindly shade of Darwin rises up to dispel these idle dreams. I do not mean the polluted stream of Darwinian theory after it had emerged from the minds of German philosophers, after it had been used to manufacture the Frankenstein super-man of Nietzsche, and to justify the military super-state of Treitschke. I mean by Darwin the true unpolitical man of science, thoroughly English in his refusal to erect an organized system out of the results of his own experimental investigations. Only the naïve egoism of the Prussian could derive from the theory of evolution his own pre-eminent right to exist and survive. Only the exact and efficient German mentality could extract from Darwin an immediate political value, so that he could be placed side by side with Captain Mahan as an instrument of propaganda on behalf of the morality and "biological necessity" of war. Evolution cannot solve for us our political problems, but it is a mental guide, which should prevent us from sharing the vain imaginings that appear to obsess the somewhat clouded minds of our contemporary politicians.

The upheaval of war has been great; how great we are too close and too affected accurately to measure. The

extent of the catastrophe may be as great as the fall of Babylon or Rome; it may be as comparatively small as the fall of Carthage or Napoleon. But whatever it may be, it is foolish to imagine that the continuity of human life has been definitely broken. The roots of civilization are deeply embedded in the past and cannot be shaken by the ephemeral actions even of German professors. We cannot so easily rid ourselves of our vast historical inheritance. The men who attended the Peace Conference may have had a superficial belief that the slate was clean for them to write upon, but when they began to write it was obvious enough that it was only a new chapter of an old book. We have learned from Darwin only the mere fact that we do evolve; we have to find out for ourselves the direction in which we are moving, or ought to move. Such discovery is the business of the statesman. To discover what we shall become, he must understand that what we are is the result of what we have been. He cannot ignore the past or pretend that it is erased.

It has been said that statesmanship is the utilization of history. But history is not one of the exact sciences. It is proverbially supposed to repeat itself, but its repetitions are made as a rule under such altered circumstances that they are hardly to be differentiated from variations. Even the tendencies of history are so shadowy that they are as easily manipulated as arithmetic, and provide as glorious a field for the exercise of

temperament as does philosophy. Historical analysis is colored or distorted to suit not only the type of mind that is dealing with it, but also to suit the case that that mind is trying to prove. The historians of the seventeenth century observe the past through the spectacles of religion. The historians of the eighteenth century are obsessed with Voltairian skepticism, those of the nineteenth with Darwinian nationalism. This attribute of the historical muse is so constant that we in our time cannot hope to escape it, or to prevent the sociological bias of this century from dominating our views about the past. Mr. Chesterton's brilliant *Short History of England* is the product of this new angle of vision. We find his work and the essays of the Hammonds amazingly interesting. We cannot understand how they manage to put new life into the dry bones of the familiar story. We do not realize that the thrill we feel was probably felt by Horace Walpole as he read with avidity those tomes of Gibbon that we think so ponderous, and that we leave so religiously unread. It is a mistake to think that the value of written history is vitiated by its susceptibility to temperament or by its subservience to the spirit of the age. The complacent Victorians used to abuse Macaulay for his Whig bias and maintain that his history was not true. "Truth," says William James in his *Essay on Pragmatism*, "means nothing but this, that ideas (which themselves are but parts of our experience) become true just in so far as they help us to

get into satisfactory relation with other parts of our experience." This definition of truth is just as applicable to history as it is to philosophy. There is no abstract historical truth. The only interest and value to be obtained from the sterile facts of the Great Rebellion is the reflection of those facts through the minds and temperaments of Cromwell and Milton, of Clarendon, of Carlyle, and Gardiner. Each one of those men is blatantly prejudiced not only by his own temperament, but also by his own environment. But it is the prejudice that counts. It is the prejudice and not the so-called facts that statesmanship can utilize. It is the ever-changing prejudice that keeps history alive, just as poetry is kept alive by new ways of giving expression to old emotions. History more than any other of the arts is condemned to the use of old bottles, but fortunately the supply of new wine with which to fill them is inexhaustible. The bouquet of the contemporary vintage is not of our choosing, but, forced as we are to drink it, we get pleasure from the novelty of its taste.

It cannot be questioned that we can draw from the study of history deductions of sufficient value at any rate to refute some of the premises on which the Coalition faith is founded. The idea of a new world in which the old political parties, and more especially the Liberal Party, do not exist, is no doubt a very convenient theory for the parents of the political abortion that has been christened the Coalition. It is the fashion in these

days to deplore the existence of political parties, and indeed, in so far as the terms Liberal and Conservative imply the centralized and domineering caucuses of contemporary politics, it is impossible to do otherwise than condemn them. But the old names mean more than this. Beneath the discreditable and probably temporary veneer of corruption, they stand for certain broad lines of permanent and temperamental division between human beings. Those who possess, and those who do not possess, is the obvious external and sociological division. Those who love change, and those who fear it, is a more subtle one. Those who are fascinated by progress contrasted with those who admire order. Those who believe in independence contrasted with those who believe in authority. As Mr. Birrell says, Liberalism is not a creed, it is an attitude of mind. It is the open and receptive mind, eager for new impressions, brave, poetic, and illogical. But Mr. Birrell's remark is equally true of Conservatism. That, too, is an attitude of mind—prudent, practical, and systematic. Throughout all history, called by different names, moved by different emotions, working for different objects, this broad division of humanity can be observed. We find the Liberal taking the step forward, the Conservative consolidating that step, pruning it of what he calls its dangers, but which are its virtues, making it solid and safe and bloodless, turning it from a rebellious and splendid inspiration into a logical and practical

system of life. Christianity was a Liberal movement; the Church is a Conservative institution. St. Peter was a Radical; Constantine the Great was a Conservative. It is a common error to imagine that what is new must be Liberalism. The Socialists are under the illusion today that their doctrines are progressive, when they are in fact reactionary. No doubt in the time of Constantine his adoption of Christianity as the religion of the empire was looked upon as a bold and radical measure. We see now that it was the deadly embrace of officialdom; that it destroyed the revolutionary and democratic basis of Christianity, and that it led inevitably to the systematized despotism of the Church under Hildebrand. Conservatism is not a passive adoration of the *status quo*; it is an active determination to control the political system, to organize its tendencies, and to educate its offspring. The true and dangerous Conservatives are not those who put Galileo in prison for daring to say that the earth went round the sun, but those who saw that that exciting and astounding fact could be reconciled to existing institutions, and that man could be induced to obey authority even under a stationary sun. Conservatism has produced many great men, and it has always obtained the blind support of the common mass of mankind. The uneducated and unenterprising, those who prefer the evils they know of to the unknown, those who like to live along quietly and not be worried with ideas or emotions, have always supported the safe

counsels of reactionary politics. Liberals have been obliged not only to produce an idea, but to sweep the world with an emotion for that idea. Because they have time and truth on their side, they have accomplished this again and again. But it is after the wave of emotion has subsided that the encroachments of reaction begin.

It must be pointed out at once that there is no third classification in addition to Liberalism and Conservatism into which human beings naturally fall. Labor, for instance, may represent, and indeed does represent, a class distinction vital enough in its social meaning to justify its separate political existence. But its divergence from the older parties is merely social, and is probably ephemeral. It always has had and always will have great difficulty in maintaining its identity, because it does not represent anything fundamental in human nature. Labor has, of course, external characteristics and points of view that appear to differentiate it from Liberalism. Those who take the narrow and superficial view that political division is always a class division, that a Conservative is always upper-class and a Liberal always middle-class, can easily draw the conclusion from so false a premise that Labor, representing the lower-class, is an inevitable third member of the political trinity. They point out that differences of education and environment, different desires produced by different conditions of life and work, make it impossible for the

middle-class Liberal either to understand or to legislate for lower-class Labor. By such an argument politics is placed on a low plane. It is degraded into a mere battle of selfish interests, in which the effort of the poor to down the rich is no nobler than the efforts of the rich to hold their own. Such a view of the functions of politics is not only vulgar and sterile, but has been proved untrue by the past experience of mankind. History is strewn with fierce conflicts in which class distinction had no part whatever. It never occurs to anyone to inquire to what class the Conservative Dante or the Liberal Luther belonged; it never occurs to anyone that the motive of class entered into the things they fought for. Class war is no explanation whatever of the prolonged struggle between Wallenstein and Gustavus Adolphus. We presume that the latter was upper-class because he was a king; but we know that he was a Liberal, just as well as we know that Wallenstein was a Conservative. Because at this particular moment there is an ephemeral conflict between the classes we are blind enough to imagine that such a conflict represents a permanent division. Labor is conscious of its place in this ephemeral conflict; it is conscious of its temporary interests. But the moment any large political question comes up for thought and discussion, it is forced by the nature of things to take either a Liberal or a Conservative view of that question. Whenever Labor rises up to take an unselfish or a moral standpoint it loses its

identity as a class, and, often to its annoyance, finds itself obliged to act with the older and more genuine political parties. As a general rule the instinct of Labor is towards Liberalism and liberty, but, as we shall see, in its attitude towards Socialism it has taken the road towards Conservative reaction.

The attitudes towards life which we label Liberal and Conservative do not change in the changing circumstances of evolution. Men either believe in progress, or they do not. The skeptical temperament of Mr. Balfour is more refined and more urbane than the irritable disgust of Moses, but they both share the profound instinct that mankind is an unchangeable mob, incapable of liberty, who must be forced by law and order into the path of virtue. The disbelief in progress rarely comes out into the open of actual expression. Hobbes, indeed, under the free influence of the Renaissance, and wishing to defend the monarchical system that he saw disappearing around him, took no trouble to disguise the fact that his theory rested on an estimate of mankind so low that the State was merely the outcome of its baseness. According to him men only desire to preserve themselves and to enjoy themselves, and government is necessary merely to restrain their selfish and indecent passions. The desire for liberty is only a desire to do what is wrong; if it were not, it would be unnecessary to ask for it. The necessity for a strong government to control this miserable mob is the justification of despotism.

But as a rule the Conservative temperament is not so frank; its processes are instinctive in so far that they are uninfluenced by philosophic thought. The splendid story of the Liberal youth of Moses, if we may be allowed by the historical purists to accept that story at its face value, is full of the passion for national liberty, and yet it is not as a Liberal that Moses set his most decisive mark on the history of the world. He did not retain his youthful outlook. His love of national liberty did not broaden into a love of individual liberty. On the contrary, the difficulties of his political leadership, the inevitable ignorance and stupidity of those he led, hardened his mind and character in a Conservative direction. During the forty years of struggle and difficulty in the wilderness the people often fell away into bad habits, were discontented and ungrateful. The promised land of Liberalism seemed always unattainable, and the food of liberty a very humble fare compared with the fleshpots of Egypt. They got tired of eating manna, and when they asked their patriarchal food-controller for meat, he complained of the burden of ruling such a people. Moses had no real sympathy with them; on the contrary, they irritated him, and he grew to despise and distrust them. It was on the basis of this contempt and distrust that he built up that elaborate theocratic system that is the monument of his Conservative old age. The great figure that sits forever immortalized by Michael Angelo in the church of

S. Pietro in Vinculo is the Conservative origin of the dominion of authority over freedom of thought and action. Yet so deep was the disbelief in humanity in the heart of the lonely old man that he distrusted the efficacy even of his own hide-bound system, and in his dying speech he anticipated that the people would "turn aside from the way which he had commanded."

It is clear that the powerful, by merely denying the existence of progress, and by legislating on the basis of its impossibility, themselves tend to prevent the appearance of what they deny. The artificial Socialism of military Sparta, the long Conservative history of Rome, as an aristocratic Republic, as a military Empire, and as an Empire made holy by theocratic despotism, are proof enough that men who do not believe in progress can enormously delay, although they cannot prevent, the processes of evolution.

And, in addition to what may be called the offensive action of Conservative thought against progress, history contains many examples of its defensive action when it is faced by an outburst of Liberal agitation or by the pressure of a Liberal tendency. Sometimes this defensive action takes the vulgar form of attempted extermination.

The Scribes, the Pharisees, the Priests, the Elders, and the governing theocrats in Jerusalem, finding that Christianity attacked them personally, held them up to contempt, and destroyed their prestige, their authority,

and their occupation, attempted to save their system and incidentally themselves by destroying Christ, and afterwards His disciples. A little later the Roman Emperors, finding that the Christians refused to be absorbed into the Imperial system, and that their intolerant zeal, combined with the purity of their morals, made it impossible to beguile them either by the Stoic sense of duty or by the Epicurean pleasures of the flesh, from the contemplation of their revolutionary ideals, also took refuge in the policy of persecution. It was the same motive that, centuries later, prompted the Conservative Church itself, when faced with the Liberal influences of the Reformation, to resort to the horrors of the Inquisition. The invasion of France by the allied Powers of Europe after the Revolution, and the Siberian prisons of the Russian Czars are other forms which the instinct of Conservative self-preservation has assumed.

But there are more subtle methods of defense than persecution and extermination. The attitude of Constantine the Great was more dangerous to the Liberal spirit of Christianity than that of Nero. He saw the value to the State of a system of ethics that preached a high standard of public and private virtue, and enforced that system by insisting upon complete obedience. The Emperors were well accustomed to the political uses of superstition; they had often created themselves gods and employed their divinity to increase their power over the pagan world. The pure teaching of Christ had

seemed to offer no political advantage to the Imperial idea; on the contrary, it conflicted essentially with the Imperial policy and could not be combined with it. But the organized Church, with Aaron at its head, was a very different story, and Constantine saw that there was room for a new Moses to complete the theocracy. He proposed to be that Moses: by signs and wonders and dreams he installed himself as the divine leader of Christianity, and at the same time made himself master of the temporal policy of the Church.

After the conversion of Constantine, Christianity ceased to be a revolutionary portent; it was safely attached to the State, and became as Conservative an institution as the State itself. In the same way Karl Marx was far more dangerous to Democracy than William Pitt. He, too, attempted to stifle the Liberal spirit of Democracy by harnessing it to the State, by handing over its direction to officials, and by constructing around it the barbed-wire defenses of systematized organization. Both Constantine and Karl Marx shared the Conservative desire to seize a Liberal idea that appeared to contain the elements of liberty, and to transform it into an efficient implement of control.

It is clear, therefore, that the fundamental basis of what we call Conservatism is a refusal to believe in progress combined with a determination to prevent its taking place. It is the exact contrary to the Liberal belief in progress, in an ever-increasing measure of liberty.

The idea of Liberty is not a new one; it was not invented by John Stuart Mill. It is not even the child of the French Revolution. It is, indeed, the most primitive of human desires, and the earliest recorded political movements of history are concerned with the endeavor to obtain it or to refuse it. Liberty is fundamentally the desire for the free expression of individuality, whether personally or nationally, and the liberal mind is the mind that places that desire first in moral and political importance, and admits its preëminent rights. The Conservative mind in its opposition to liberty maintains that liberty is wasteful and chaotic, and that a complicated world cannot be efficiently run if free play is given to the infinite variety of individuals. The Liberal, on the other hand, maintains that the orderly rules of a logical system stultify the mind and heart of humanity, and that the finest results of the human spirit have always been and can only be produced by the free mind of the individual or the nation working amid the chaos. The conflict of these two temperaments can be observed even in so primitive an institution as that of the family, where the parent has almost invariably stood for the theory of efficiency, for order, habit, and obedience, for the systematized arrangement and manipulation of education, opinion, and belief, and the child for the theory of liberty, for inquiry into the established, for curiosity about the unaccustomed, and for revolt against convention. I do not mean, of course,

that the young are always liberal and the old always conservative, but youth, not necessarily of years, but often of mind, is undoubtedly an element in this persistent clash of outlook. Just as young people are more apt to be liberal and to believe in liberty than old ones, so are young nations and young civilizations compared with the old ones, and young ideas like young people are apt to harden and grow more conservative as they grow older. Some people never lose their youthfulness of vision; some nations, like the Greeks and the English, would rather die than lose their belief in liberty; others, like the Romans and the Germans, solidify easily into efficiency. But the classification of temperament remains invariable, so invariable that it can be made the test of all political institutions and propositions.

Man is not born free as Rousseau believed; on the contrary, his effort has been, and still is, to obtain freedom both from those laws of nature and those laws of man that endeavor to control him. Modern anthropology has taught us the fallacy of primeval freedom. The bitter wit of Voltaire anticipated our views of the absurdity of that theory when he said that the writings of Rousseau "made one long to walk on all fours." Mankind was not born free, has never been free, and is not free. What is the test of freedom? How can we tell if we are free? The only way of knowing whether we are free is to contrast the freedom of our political condition with some real freedom. We know that,

since the Reformation, our thought has been free. Before the appearance of Luther in 1520 the control of the State over the minds of men varied greatly from age to age in intensity, from the light reign of the Roman Pontifex Maximus and Censor to the iron hand of the Spanish Inquisition. It is easy to see how the illusion of liberty arises from time to time. During the terrible persecutions in Spain during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries men must have looked across the Mediterranean with envy to the comparative immunity of Italy, where, whatever their political despotism may have been, the Viscontis of Milan, the Medicis of Florence, and the Doges of Venice were permitting their subjects to bathe in the glorious sunshine of the Renaissance. Yet we know that the Italy of the Renaissance was only comparatively, not really, free to think as it pleased. In 1498, six years after the death of that fine flower of the Renaissance, Lorenzo the Magnificent, Savonarola was condemned by the Pope to die for daring to preach a religious revival and a return to purity of manners. But since the Reformation we know that we are really free. We can think what we like and say what we like, and no man can prevent us. When it is really obtained, and is not merely comparative, freedom is unmistakable. But, though this unmistakable political freedom has never existed, men, owing to the variations in the strength of the control over them, have often thought themselves free. The Romans who

suffered under the degraded tyranny of Caligula looked back on the close aristocratic control of the Senate in the age of Cato as to a golden age of freedom. Conservative revolutions all through history have been looked upon, often merely because revolution of any sort entails radical change, as an advance towards liberty. We shall have to examine this illusion of revolution later on; it must suffice now to say that even the despotism of Napoleon appeared to his marshals an age of wonderful liberty. Man has never been free, he has only been comparatively free. And man is not free now. No one will deny that under Democracy men are comparatively more free than they were under other forms of government. Hobbes was wrong when he said that Monarchy was a better form of government than Democracy, so wrong that his opinion has stultified his influence. But he was more nearly right when he said that the struggle of his time was a struggle for power and not for liberty.

In a world, therefore, which never has been and is not free, the acid test of political change is whether that change is a tendency towards liberty or not. Democracy, when it arose and overthrew Monarchy, had that tendency, even though it was a transfer of power.

Socialism, on the other hand, if it ever arises and overthrows Democracy, will not be a Liberal revolution, but a Conservative reaction, because it contains no tendency towards liberty whatever.

The world, therefore, in spite of wars, coalitions, and

other disturbing phenomena, is still a place where some men want to go forward towards freedom, and others regard such progress as impossible. The former are Liberals, and all the miasma of class conflict and the fog of party warfare cannot prevent them from holding their place in political life. The ephemeral labels that mental confusion encourages us to attach to the struggling atoms around us are of small consequence. The Republicans contest bitterly with the Democrats in the United States; in England a body of men may call themselves Labor, and another may call themselves National. But even the mental agility of a Welsh Wizard cannot permanently disguise the realities of psychology. In America the Republican is really a Conservative, and the Democrat a Liberal. In England the Labor man, if he believes in Socialism, is at heart the most reactionary of Conservatives. It may seem strange, perhaps incredible, but even the deep political thought and the profound statesmanship that we know to be so characteristic of our political leaders, has not yet shaken seriously the Darwinian theory of evolution.

CHAPTER II

THE STATIC STATE

THE Conservative denial of progress may seem a cold and unsatisfactory creed, unlikely to hold men by its appeal either to their energies or their passions. The sanguine optimism of the Liberal, who said that man would find a way to prevent the sun from getting cool, is contrasted with the unenthusiastic pessimism of Mr. Balfour, who is supposed to have said that he believed there had once been an ice age, and that he believed that some day there would be another. But it is an illusion to imagine that the denial of progress is a creed that brings no fervor to its devotees, that produces no passion other than a nerveless and apathetic cynicism. For the denial of progress is merely the framework of the clean slate. Having swept away with a gesture of contempt the theory of evolution; having convinced oneself that mankind has not changed and will not change; it remains for the superior person to draw up rules for this hopeless and otherwise unmanageable mob of humanity. The drawing up of rules is, at least for those who draw them up, the most engrossing of

pursuits. Those who indulge in this sinister form of occupation obtain some part of the sensation of vast superiority that the schoolmaster feels for his pupils. They can put their contempt into intellectual form; they can combine a quantity of sensual pleasures; the conception of a rounded and definite idea, the exercise of authority, the sensation of patronage, of virtue and good works. It is these physical and intellectual delights that have in all ages tempted the philosopher, the bureaucrat, and the statesman to build on the foundation of a denial of progress the monstrous temple of the Static State.

It is obvious that, progress once denied, it is logically possible to evolve a system that need never be altered, and can remain a permanent instrument for the government of a naughty world. Man being, as Hobbes thought, a base creature, and as his baseness could be presumed to be permanent, it only remains to construct a permanent system to keep him in order. If the Conservative premise is once granted, the Static State follows logically and inevitably, and free play is given to the tyrannical instincts of the superior mind.

The laws of Moses cover every conceivable department of human life. Many of them still remain good and useful, as do many of the laws of Solon or Justinian; others are absurd, or cruel, or antiquated. But their value is of no consequence; the point is that they are unchangeable. No alterations of opinion and feeling,

no change in circumstance or civilization, is allowed to make them obsolete. The theocratic system of Moses, framed for the government of a primitive and barbarous people, was supposed to be a perpetual dispensation of wisdom, and one of the main counts against Christ and His Apostles in the eyes of the Conservative Jews was that they attacked the Mosaic tradition and wished to alter the Mosaic law.

The socialistic military State designed for Sparta by Lycurgus was equally based upon ideas that never wavered or altered. The machine for the production of efficient soldiers, with its complete denial of liberty and its refusal to consider either the desires of men or the differences between them, was constructed on definite socialistic lines for definite military purposes. No doubt it was efficient and effective; no doubt it enabled Sparta to defeat and destroy the Athenian Republic. But Sparta produced nothing except her laws and her soldiers. For five hundred years she clung rigidly to her organized system, long after it had lost every trace of usefulness and virtue, and she went down before the superior militarism of Macedonia in the immutable conviction that the primitive ideas of Lycurgus were the ultimate and everlasting standards of civilized life.

Intellect without understanding, so typical of the pedagogue, appears to be the influence that produces these cast-iron political organizations. They are foreign to the temperament of men of action, however Con-

servative the latter may be. Rome, for instance, that was the nursery of men of action, but produced no philosophers of any account, was far more opportunist than Sparta in the conduct of her Conservative existence. The Conservative monarchies also, that grew up like mushrooms on the decayed ruins of Rome, were as unintellectual as Rome herself, and made no effort to surround themselves with an organized structure of Conservative thought. The fertile minds of the Jews and the Greeks have handed down to us the tradition of arm-chair political construction, the subtle pleasure of which appealed, not only to law-givers who had the power to apply it, but also to philosophers who played it as a game is played that has no relation to the reality of life. Plato and Aristotle, self-appointed teachers of mankind, full of wild dreams and mischievous theories, lay down the so-called laws of government, and from their speculations arose the fatal assumption that politics is a science and not an art. It is that assumption, adopted by Rousseau from Plato, and descending from Rousseau to Karl Marx, that has been responsible for all that is evil in political philosophy. If government had been treated as an art, which is what it is, the ideas of the philosophers, their speculations upon its technique, upon its history, and upon its probable evolution, would have been of immense value to humanity. Unfortunately the philosophers chose to treat government as an abstract science; they resolutely shut their eyes,

as true Conservatives must, to the two most important elements in government, history, and evolution; and, arguing from the general to the particular, they academically constructed, by the process of deduction, the ideal State.

The Republic of Plato is the perfect example of an ideal State, from which all the weaknesses of existing States and all the shortcomings of human nature are carefully eliminated. It is intellectually, but not practically, scientific; for science, if it is true science, can be applied. Yet it is obvious that any attempt to establish such an ideal State by means of revolution on the decayed ruins of a previous civilization would be bound to fail. Plato himself attempted in vain to realize his theories in the education of the younger Dionysius of Syracuse, just as Rousseau failed to apply his political schemes to Corsica and Poland, and just as Robert Owen and Cabot failed in Indiana and Illinois to realize in practice the socialistic community.

The academic conclusions of Plato had little practical influence on the Greeks themselves, produced as they were at the end of the great period of Athenian liberty. He had not created that liberty, nor could he prevent its destruction by Macedonia. Nor is it surprising that his political philosophy, which had failed to influence the Liberal spirit of Athens, was completely submerged by the Conservative tide of Roman political instincts. The Roman mind was entirely unsympathetic to philo-

sophical speculation. The practical realism of Cæsar, building up just what was possible out of the material at hand, succeeded by the intolerance of organized Christianity, and by the opportunism of organized monarchy, suppressed for long ages the intellectual methods of political thought.

When, however, the Renaissance had opened up to the intelligent classes the writings of Plato, and the Reformation had removed the religious ban against speculative thought, the arm-chair came into its own again. Hobbes began to think out a scientific defense of those monarchies which had existed for so many centuries without any philosophic assistance whatever. Locke began to construct a vindication of Parliamentary government.

Fortunately for England, those men were recorders rather than prophets, presenting us merely with the accumulated results of political experience, and the English themselves, positive in spirit and possessed with an ingrained hatred of abstract theories, were, like the Athenians, influenced but little by this elevated exposition of their own actions. The soil of England was too naturally Liberal to nourish such noxious weeds. The logical character of the French, and the Conservative tradition of the Germans, carried the false science of government to its terrible conclusions. Rousseau had very little knowledge of history or affairs, and, of course, no true idea of progress. He believed implicitly

in the clean slate, was convinced that it was possible to make a fresh start in the complicated modern world. Like his pupil, Karl Marx, he believed mankind to be so completely passive that the wise man could root out from him the effects of his own growth; he believed him to be so completely plastic that, in spite of all the modifications produced by education, heredity, and custom, he would not resist the attempt to sweep away the complicated institutions that he has almost unconsciously constructed. Rousseau, like Lloyd George, believed in a new world, which he could deal with from his arm-chair, much as God might deal with Adam. But Rousseau was not God, and man has changed since the time of Adam; nor can he be replaced in the Garden of Eden. Rousseau says himself that nations as well as men are tractable only in their youth, and become incorrigible as they grow old. He admits that it is futile and perilous to try and reform established customs and rooted prejudices, and that any attempt to do so may result rather in commotions that destroy than in revolutions that restore the State. Yet his whole scheme entails the attainment of a sham youth, and ignores the complexities of modern societies. The truth is that he believed society to be static, and, ignoring progress and development, he produced, like his Socialist successors, a political machine, founded upon the suppression of individual liberty and the centralization of all the powers of the community. Rousseau was not wrong to

attack the decayed monarchy of France and to attempt to sweep away its Conservative system; his fault was to replace it by a Conservative system of his own. So Socialism is not wrong in wishing to stamp out the evils of Conservative Capitalism; its fault is in trying to replace it by a Conservative system of its own. The failure and terror of the French Revolution were the results of applied science.

It is interesting to observe how the cautious Anglo-Saxon character, distrustful of all theories, chooses out what is good and true from the dross of Rousseau's fantastic schemes; while the logical French character carries those schemes direct to their terrible fulfillment. Perhaps the mind that guided Jefferson can be forgiven the fault of having inspired Robespierre. The Declaration of Independence is a paraphrase of the Social Contract, and it, too, was followed by the violence and aggressive action of revolution employed in the destruction of the past. Yet in 1787, two years before the French people themselves attempted to pursue in action the scientific ideas of philosophy, the enthusiasm of Jefferson was replaced in America by the practical spirit of Alexander Hamilton, and the compromises and adjustments of the American constitution were built up on the ruins of the Revolution.

The idea of the Static State and the pleasure of constructing it passed naturally from France into Conservative Germany. Germany had always been the

Conservative influence in Europe. The memory of the Universal State, which the Teutons in their barbarous youth had inherited from Rome, never died away. Lord Bryce says that to be universal sovereign Germany had sacrificed her own political existence. It was because of her love for the Universal State that she was from the start opposed, just as she is to-day, to the principle of nationality. It should not be forgotten that the nations of modern Europe are derived, not from the splitting up of the Roman Empire, but from the splitting up of that German creation that went by the name of the Holy Roman Empire. It was natural that the Germans should not countenance a movement towards nationality made at their expense, a movement, too, that derived its success from the internecine quarrel between the Universal State and the Universal Church. She, the Universal State, could not adjust herself sufficiently even to consider her own existence as a nation. She had no share in the monarchical movement, which, Conservative though it was, consolidated the new nations and removed a thousand petty tyrannies and local despotisms. She did not share in the Liberalizing process of the Renaissance. Her Emperor, Charles V, took the wrong and Conservative side in the Reformation, looking upon that Liberal movement merely as an opportunity to get even with the Universal Church and restore the Universal State. Fighting to preserve vast territories populated by foreign races,

and herself for two hundred years lost in a welter of local wars and family ambitions, Germany eventually allowed herself to fall into the hands of Prussia, the most barbarous and Conservative of all her States. The failure of Germany to take her part in the progressive movements that successively passed over Europe had a profound influence on human affairs. When she reached in 1870 the political condition that England had attained in 1588, she was still dreaming of the Universal State, still absorbing from Machiavelli and Frederick the Great the uses of militarism for the purpose of constructing it, and of holding it when constructed.

The schemes of Wilhelm II and Karl Marx are but different versions of the same Conservative idea, different methods of attaining it. The man of action is no more Conservative than the arm-chair philosopher, although more Roman in his opportunism. Treitschke and Karl Marx are both the children of materialism. They both derive from Hegel that overpowering belief in organization which is the basis of Prussian Militarism and Prussian Socialism. They only differ in the detail that Treitschke aimed at restoring the Universal State, while Karl Marx aimed at constructing the Static State. The latter gathers up from the history of political philosophy every idea that seemed to argue the necessity and excellence of the Static State. He is undeterred by the lamentable failures of his predecessors.

The Socialist ideal State, ignoring all the natural rights and unchangeable desires of the individual, repudiating the fundamental ideas both of Christianity and democracy, utterly devoid of that tendency towards liberty which is the test of political conceptions, was laboriously and scientifically constructed on the belief that men live by bread alone, that their past is the development of economics, and that their future can be organized and solidified into a definite and calculated system of social laws.

Liberals are and must be the enemies of the Static State. They believe it to be the product of disappointment, disillusion, and impatience. Plato turns towards the ideal State because he is living in the decline of Athenian liberty. Machiavelli turns from the distracted Italian Republics to the study of a calm and strong despotism. Rousseau declaims his Utopia because he cannot tolerate the misery of monarchical France. Karl Marx elevates his socialistic structure because he despairs of otherwise removing the evils of industrialism. Like all quacks, they provide us with a panacea, a quick yet lasting cure for all the evils of human life. Disbelief in progress, combined with a horror of the present, prompts the Conservative mind to these systematized organizations. The difference between the Conservative view of life as represented by Karl Marx and the Liberal view is admirably stated by Lord Acton when he says that "the end of government is liberty,

not happiness, or prosperity, or power, or the adaptation of national law to national character, or enlightenment, or the promotion of virtue; the end of government is that the private individual should not feel the pressure of public authority, and should direct his life by the influences that are within him, not around him."

The Static State of Karl Marx may make us happy and prosperous, virtuous and enlightened, but it cannot make us free, because its whole essence is the pressure of public authority.

There is a perpetual conflict between the desire of the individual for complete liberty and the necessity of granting to governments power to carry out their functions. The problem of statecraft is how to combine security with absolute freedom. In our days there is a compromise by which we obtain to a certain extent both security and freedom, without completely obtaining either. But the Liberal view is that it is our business to obtain both completely, and that we shall not do so if, in our eagerness for definite conclusions, we admit the possibility of a permanent and final constitution of the State.

The fury of Burke against Rousseau is typical of the Anglo-Saxon view of life and its refusal to be contaminated with Conservative ideas. Burke had bitterly opposed the taxation of the American colonies, and had made every effort for conciliation with the rebels, and it is all the more interesting to find a man so liberal in

his views turning upon the French and calling them "the ablest architects of ruin that had hitherto existed in the world." He upbraids them for not having copied the English constitution, forgetting that you cannot arise one morning and imitate an institution that has grown up during the centuries, and been handed down from generation to generation. He could not bear the philosophical examination of our ancient constitution, and maintained that it should be "enjoyed, not discussed." Its rights and privileges had come down to us by a long inheritance of "regulated liberty," giving it the sanction not only of utility, but of tradition. These inherited rights, far more valuable than the "rights of man," given us to enjoy and hand down to our children just as property is enjoyed and handed down, are the basis of our established government, which should be accepted and obeyed. This attitude does not exclude a "principle of improvement," but it tempers the spirit of freedom with a grave sense of continuity and conservation. Unless that spirit of reverence is present, people forget that they have no rights that are inconsistent with virtue, and they come to believe that the rights of the people are synonymous with their power. We, who have not been "subtilized into savages" by philosophers, know how few discoveries can be made in the principles of government, or even in the ideas of liberty or morality. Virtue must remain the foundation of the State, and prudence is the greatest

of political virtues. "A true politician always considers how he shall make the most of the existing materials of his country." He does not act from a theory of the rights of man, but from "internal promptings," which warn him that institutions arise from the needs and circumstances of the people, and are the result of slow and careful growth. They cannot be imposed upon us from outside, we are not "embowelled and fitted like stuffed birds in a museum with chaff and rags and paltry blurred shreds of paper about the rights of man." The private stock of reason of which men can avail themselves is very small; it is far wiser to use the accumulated experience of all time and of all nations. Those who wish to set up a scheme of society on new principles despise the old and permanent traditions of mankind. "Rage and phrenzy will pull down more in half an hour than prudence, deliberation, and foresight can build up in a hundred years." Nature herself in all her processes warns us to be slow and careful, and we should so arrange our political life that "in what we improve we are never wholly new, and in what we retain we are never wholly obsolete."

Burke refuses to admit the possibility of the "clean slate" in politics, which had been the main postulate of Rousseau's scheme. He even puts in a plea for prejudice, saying that, when prejudice has been long held, it is better than reason for the multitude, because it nearly always has sound reasons for its existence, and

represents some utility or necessity demanded by the character of the race or the history of the nation. The idea that these prejudices should be overborne by abstract reason places uncultivated people at the mercy of every quack with brains enough to push a theory. The prejudices of the uncultivated may be wrong, they may even be a hindrance to progress, but they must not surrender them merely because they cannot answer the arguments of abstract reason, but only because they have been taught by experience to dispense with them. Society is divine in the sense that it has been the instrument of progress and must be considered therefore to have been contained in the Plan of the Universe. Society is a partnership for the promotion of virtue. England cannot tolerate, can have nothing but a "sullen aversion" for a "cabal of philosophers" who had no part in the making of our constitution, and do not understand our method of improving it. We know that there are other means of improvement outside of total revolution. Those who destroy everything will no doubt remove some grievances, but we pay too heavy a price for what we gain. Such methods are contrary to the simplicity and directness of our national character, which has a firmly fixed belief that "all change is a subject of compromise, which naturally begets moderation."

Burke was what is known in England as a Conservative, but it is clear how very different his Conservatism

is from that of Rousseau and Karl Marx. He realized, and they did not, that mankind desires the liberty to go forward to the great future that he believes to be implied in his amazing past. Such liberty is his natural right, and, as he grows more civilized, he requires an ever greater amount of it. No Static system, however scientific, however efficient, whether it is contrived by Rousseau or contrived by Karl Marx, can deprive him of that right. Order and progress are, as Comte observed, the criterion of good government. "Order," says Mill, and his definition should be studied by all those who advocate total revolutions followed by Static political systems, "is the preservation of all kinds and amounts of good that already exist, and progress consists in the increase of them." The construction of an ideal State must repudiate progress, because otherwise it would have the impossible task of framing itself to fit all the future stages and developments of human life. The truth is that no system of government is suitable to all communities, and that even the community to which it is suitable cannot treat it as Static and suitable for all time.

Liberals believe in democracy, not as an end in itself, but, as Mill said, "the best available device for our present political condition." They believe in it because it is not Static like Socialism, but has a tendency towards increasing the liberty of the individual from the yoke of opinion and of law. They know that to a certain

degree State interference with the liberty of the individual is at this time inevitable; but they desire to keep that degree as small as possible, and to make it ever smaller, instead of building up a system from the embraces of which the individual can never escape. Mill thought that the fruition of all progress was the expansion of the individual nature and the individual personality, free from every possible restraint and pressure; from every invasion and intrusion. It is because the Static State of Socialism holds out no hope of that fruition that Liberalism is bound to oppose it.

CHAPTER III

STATE IDOLATRY

Those wise men who make rules and draw up constitutions have always been confronted with the schoolmaster's difficulty of getting the wicked and unruly children to obey them. Nobody likes rules; on the contrary, their natural instinct is to evade them. Very few people can even be brought to admit that a rule as such can be a good one, or that the man who made it is any wiser than his neighbors. Men, like children, are easily provoked into disobedience.

Many people who are afraid of the damp never walk on the grass except when there is a notice forbidding them to do it. All decent men exceed the speed limit, and endeavor to elude the tax-collector. For the instinct of personal liberty is, fortunately for humanity, deeply ingrained in our natures. The Static State, therefore, whose origins we have been examining, faced with the rebellious and insubordinate temperament of the mere mob beneath it, has always searched for a sanction on which to base its authority. We have to be awed or cowed into submission and obedience. Some

spiritual or moral sanction has to be produced before we will admit the divinity or majesty of the Static State. We know the grubby hands of clay that wrote down these tiresome rules. We feel as a boy would feel if his schoolmaster turned out to be an old and much chaffed uncle; or as a girl would feel if she was asked to curtsey to a cousin democratically married to the King.

The production of reverence is a necessary preliminary to obedience. For obedience itself is purely artificial; it has to be so laboriously inculcated even into the very youngest children, and it is obtained with infinite difficulty even from the most ignorant of men. Wise and highly civilized men no doubt obey, through the instrumentality of reason, wise and civilized laws. But unfortunately by the time we get these wise and civilized laws we ourselves shall be so wise and civilized that we shall not require any laws at all. In the meantime our obedience has to be obtained by methods far other than that of reason. Most men are devoid of reason in the opinion of those wise constructors of the Static State; and, indeed, it is fortunate for the latter that they are, for the Static State would hardly bear even a most cursory examination by the light of it. But, as they are devoid of reason, men can be deceived by superstition into the obedience we require. An instinct to worship idols seems to have been an early and most useful characteristic of mankind; useful since it was so easy for the superior person to select the idol, to decorate it

with the trappings he desired, and to manipulate it for his own ends.

The value of superstition and idolatry in politics was recognized in the very dawn of history. Moses, displaying even in his Liberal youth that distrust of humanity which was to develop into the rigid Conservatism of his old age, uses the meaner and lower instincts of patriotism to stir the sluggish mind of the people towards a desire for liberty. Because he is "slow of speech and of a slow tongue" himself, he decides to employ the demagogic gifts of his brother Aaron as a "spokesman," and the patriotic appeal is to be the prospect of being led into a land flowing with milk and honey. But even then he is not sure that he will be accepted as the destined liberator, and he decides to give himself the necessary authority by saying that he comes to lead them with the sanction of the God of their fathers. The patriotic appeal and the divine authority remain for countless centuries the sanction of the State.

Later on, when Moses was building up his elaborate theocratic system, we find him supporting it by divine authority, and obtaining for it by this means blind obedience and eternal submission. The real power of the Judge and the High Priest was carefully hidden behind the overwhelming and stultifying authority of such a dispensation. Aaron—and it is interesting to see how Moses in his youth employs his versatile and superficial brother as a sort of tribune in the cause of

liberty, and then in his Conservative old age installs him as the High Priest of an efficient and Static State—and himself, and their carefully chosen successors, were to run this mystic theocracy, because otherwise the congregation would be "as sheep that have no shepherd."

We here get the first Conservative conception of that dual authority of Church and State both acting under divine sanction that had so profound an effect on the subsequent history of the world.

The Static State of Moses was based on spiritual idolatry, an idea contrary to the whole spirit of Liberalism. The individualistic doctrines of Christ prompted Him to make a direct attack upon theocracy. He never makes the slightest attempt to observe the customs and habits of the theocracy. We find him eating with publicans and sinners, allowing his disciples to pick corn on the Sabbath, to eat bread without washing their hands, and generally ignoring the elaborate ritual which was the foundation of theocratic control. This open defiance of the law was, even more than His teaching, what forced the Conservative Jews to "take council to destroy Him." They were always asking Christ why His disciples "transgressed the tradition of the elders," and trying to extract from Him on what authority He Himself acted and who gave that authority. They knew themselves to be the repository of authority, and they could not conceive of anybody either acting or

thinking without authority. It is interesting to observe how closely the attitude of the Jewish theocracy to Christ resembles that of the Catholic Church towards the Reformers. And in the same way how the accusations of Christ against the Pharisees resemble the accusations of Luther against the Popes. Christ accuses the theocracy of teaching the commandments of men as doctrines, and, while paying lip-service to God, making His commandments of no effect by their tradition. They are the "blind leading the blind." "For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, such as the washing of pots and cups. Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition." But it is not only what the Pharisees teach that Christ attacks. He disposes of their teaching in a contemptuous phrase. "The law and the prophets *were* until John; since that time the Kingdom of God is preached." But He also attacks the Pharisees themselves, their way of life, and their characters. The keynote of the Pharisee is his hypocrisy, his pretense of preëminent virtue, his unctuous tone of superiority, his use of the law as a cloak for his own pleasure and advancement. The whole essence of the Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican praying in the temple is the complacency of the Pharisee that he, unlike other people, had followed the rules of the theocracy. "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. They say, and do not. They bind heavy

burdens and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men. They love the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the market; and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi." It is a strong indictment, not only of the theocratic system, but of the theocratic personnel as well, and it culminates in that condemning sentence in the Sermon on the Mount: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Christian attack on the ancient laws of the theocracy is carried on and developed by the disciples after the death of Christ. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," says St. John, and the whole effort of Christian teaching, especially of course to the Hebrews, is to destroy the Mosaic tradition, and replace it by a new dispensation. St. Paul is always comparing favorably the New Testament with the Old, the new covenant with the old, Mount Sion with Mount Sinai. The covenant, "that was confirmed before of God in Christ," cannot be annulled, he says, by the law that came 430 years after it. "Wherefore, then, serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions." He sees quite clearly that Moses had superimposed the law on the pure faith of Abraham because he could not deal with the barbarous

Israelites. He sees that it was a political and Conservative creation. "Before faith came, we were kept under the law. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. God sent His Son, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. But now, after ye have known God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." But not only does St. Paul attack the tradition of Moses; he condemns equally the priesthood of Aaron, the twin pillar of the theocracy. He describes the barbarous customs and sacrifices that form the ritual of the tribe of Levi. He describes how this ritual was imposed on the Jews, and how it superseded the purer priesthood of Melchisedek, just as the Mosaic law superseded the purer faith of Abraham. And he in turn supersedes the priesthood of Aaron by that of Christ, just as he superseded the law of Moses by the faith of Christ. But it is the law, its traditional sanctity and wisdom that St. Paul returns to again and again. He says to the Romans: "Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." The law was all very well in the old times when they "were in the flesh," but now they are "delivered from the law." "We should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness

of the letter." He points out to the Romans how little use their law has been to the Jews. "Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." And the law is not only useless as something sacred, even its wisdom is of no value. "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothingness the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty. God hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit. For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The indictment of traditional theocracy is complete.

It is not surprising that the individualism of Christ and His insistence that the religious beliefs of a man were his own private concern should have been resented by those to whom the thunderbolts of heaven were a useful weapon in the hands of the State. Not only the decadent Jewish theocracy, but even Rome itself felt how dangerous such individualism must be to the Conservative State. The Static State is the natural enemy of individualism, because the latter entails liberty and is the antithesis of obedience and submission. After a

few centuries of blind antagonism and unintelligent persecution, it occurred to the subtle mind of Constantine the Great to reërect the Jewish theocracy and embrace it within the Roman State. The Romans had always been a tolerant people; they had constructed their Conservative Universal State on other sanctions than those of spiritual idolatry. The Romans were an unimaginative and imitative race, drawing their political ideas from Sparta and Alexander the Great. Materialism and militarism do not admit of a spiritual sanction, and the founders of the Universal State never had any conception either of the dangers of freedom of thought, or of the uses to which controlled religion could be put. It was only when they found that their religious tolerance was endangering the political stability of the Universal State that they altered their policy and imposed the Mosaic tradition upon the Conservative fabric of Cæsar and Augustus. Constantine was far superior in ability and character to the emperors who had sought refuge in persecution. He saw the value to the State of a divine sanction; and he saw how the official recognition of this individualistic sect would tend to destroy its individualism and surround it with the attributes of authority and power. From the time of Constantine to that of Luther Christianity became a Conservative institution, a consolidation of revolutionary forces into a mere adjunct of the State, used for the purpose of controlling the minds of men, and of

giving a divine sanction to those who made and put into force the rules and regulations of existence. It was in such a light that Charlemagne himself, when he came to reconstruct the Universal State under its new Teutonic form of the Holy Roman Empire, regarded the Christian religion; and the Church itself, suddenly called from ignominy and disgrace to power and recognition, showed no jealousy of the State that had effected this transformation. She had leaders of her own, a growing sacerdotal caste, that shared with other politicians the desire to make rules, and get them obeyed. These men had no wish to bury Cæsar; on the contrary, they preferred to praise him. They knew the Jewish State had been based on religion, and they saw no harm in grafting the hierarchy of a new Aaron on to the Mosaic absolutism of the Empire.

Lord Bryce has pointed out that the two great ideas of the Middle Ages were the idea of a World-Monarchy and the idea of a World-religion. They were, of course, both inherited from the subtle compact made by Constantine with Christianity. The two Viceroys of God on earth, the Emperor and the Pope, were indeed nothing but the Judge and the High Priest of the Mosaic theocracy. The mystic dualism of the Holy Roman Church and the Holy Roman Empire was merely a spiritual despotism. The divinely chosen heads of the State could demand an unquestioning obedience. Idols had been found which appeared to guarantee the permanence of State control.

Fortunately, the Viceroys of God fell out and fought each other. They could not agree as to which of the two was superior to the other. The Popes, of course, did not wish to abolish the Empire; they only wished it to be obedient. Europe was split into Guelphs and Ghibellines struggling for supremacy, and, under the shadow of that internecine conflict, there grew up that spirit of nationality that was destined to be fatal to them both. The World-State and the World-Church contended for the head and the legs of the idol on which the supremacy of both depended, and the fall of the Carlovingian theocracy in 1246 was bound to be followed by Luther's attack on the Papacy in 1520.

It is curious to observe how deeply the idea of divine sanction had entered into the minds of those who desired to form and govern a Conservative State. The rising monarchies, freeing themselves from the control first of the Empire and then of the Papacy, nevertheless made an effort to retain from both the divine sanction that had been the origin of their authority. They did not see that the divine right of Charlemagne was far weaker, less legal, less good in title than the divine right of Constantine. And yet how far stronger, how far less easy to attack was the divine right of Charlemagne than that of the Capets and the Plantagenets. Men might not be able to withstand the spiritual authority of St. Leo the Great and Hildebrand, but Henry VIII as Defender of the Faith could hardly hope to inherit their

position. The Reformation, which began in 1520 as an attack upon the papal system, ended in 1688 as an attack on the monarchical system. Luther destroyed the work of Constantine, and rendered useless for Conservative purposes the idol of divine sanction. Since the time of the Reformation neither Pope nor Emperor nor King has been able to use that particular device for getting the rules of the State obeyed. The victory of Liberalism was so complete that not even Socialism has dared to use religion as a prop to its Static State. Christianity, the right of the individual to think as he pleases and to construct without the assistance of superior persons his own inward life, has been liberated from the suffocating embraces of the State.

But there are other idols besides religion which mankind can be tempted to worship. Moses, when he made the patriotic appeal that offered milk and honey, recognized that the selfish egoism of the individual could be transformed and heightened into a corporate egoism of immense value to the Static State. In this case it is the State itself instead of God which is the idol, and patriotism instead of eternal life which is the moral incentive. The deification of the State is the elevation of natural despotism into a theory of government in the same way that the Mosaic theocracy is the elevation of natural superstition into a theory of government. We owe the latter to the Jews, and the former to the Spartans. Lycurgus was a soldier, the production of soldiers was

his objective, and the whole energies of the State were employed for that purpose. So the fundamental idea of the Spartan constitution was that the city should be a sort of camp, in which men considered themselves born, not to serve their own ends, but to serve the interests of their country. No one was to live after their own fancy; to fight for their country, and especially to die for it, was the object of all patriotism, the sublime end of discipline and obedience. The pleasures and rights of the individual were completely subordinate to the interests of the personified State. Trade and commerce, art and literature, wealth and luxury were banished from the city. Everybody eat in common of the same bread and meat. No implement finer than the saw and the axe were to be used in the construction of a house. No lights were allowed in the streets, so that the people could learn to see in the dark. Girls were taught to wrestle and run, so that their children should be strong, and they themselves more fit to undergo the pains of child-bearing. Girls and young men danced naked to prevent them from being delicate, and to accustom them to the exposure of the air. Bachelors were disfranchised, while on the other hand it was considered honorable to give the use of your wife to any man who considered he might raise satisfactory children from her. The State examined your child, and, if these eugenistic bureaucrats disapproved of its appearance, it was exposed and destroyed; if, on the other hand, they con-

sidered it to be stout and well-made, they gave an order for it to be reared, and allotted it a share of land. But, in the absence of the right of private property, your child did not belong to you. You merely had the duty of nursing it severely at home until it was seven, teaching it not to cry, or to catch cold, or to be dainty about its food. After it was seven years old the State took it over, and the children lived together in enrolled companies. Discipline and obedience were the keynotes of their education. Reading and writing, even washing, were not considered important, or useful to the State-God. They obtained their food by stealing it, thus making themselves quick in action and hard in body. Conversation was a waste of time, and culture was effeminate. Courage, endurance, and a willingness to sacrifice everything for the deified State were inculcated as the supreme virtues. Every form of selfishness was justified by its patriotic value. Sparta was the epitome of communistic efficiency, and her socialistic idea of the State, existing in direct opposition to the Liberal individualism of Athens, has descended to us through Rome and the Teutonic Emperors, and has produced the efficiency of modern Prussia, whose socialistic militarism is itself in conflict with the Athenian individualism of the Anglo-Saxons.

The State was God to the patriotic Spartan, and the same hideous form of idolatry became the characteristic of Rome. The Romans based their whole polity upon

authority, teaching the son to reverence his father, and the citizen to reverence his rulers. Every action was judged by its usefulness to the State; every activity was compulsorily performed for the benefit of the State. The prosperity of the State was considered to be the sole aspiration of humanity. Every attempt to promote personal development was discouraged. Those who wished to be different from other people were despised, and every endeavor was made to reduce distinctive personality to a uniform level. Every individual was made to feel that he was only a part of the community, and that he must surrender his personal will to the keeping of the State. It was a subjection so complete that every human quality, every promise of individual development was submerged in an unbounded yet narrow patriotism. Love of the fatherland was obtained by the sacrifice of every form of individual culture. No Roman ever attempted to impose limitations on the State, or to assert the rights of the individual as opposed to the community. All the variety of human character, all the vitality of inward freedom, was sacrificed for the benefit of the personified State.

From Lycurgus to Bismarck there have been many variations in the outward forms of Conservative Government. The aristocratic oligarchy that ruled Rome was very different from the socialistic polity of Sparta. The Universal Imperial State constructed by Cæsar was very different from the centralized national mon-

archies that grew out of the failure of the Holy Roman Empire. But each and all, with the exception of the Papacy, have found it advantageous to employ the idol of the State as a sanction to their rule. The struggle to obtain power has been always followed, on its attainment, by the institution of State idolatry. The worship of Capitoline Jupiter and the deification of Caligula are the open and admitted examples of this idolatry; but the saying of Louis XIV that *L'état c'est moi* is not less an evidence of the continuity of this idea. By the personification of the State, and by the idea of patriotism that underlies that personification, every form of despot has obtained a sanction for his despotism, and an excuse for exacting submission and obedience.

In the eighteenth century, when the philosophers began their futile task of constructing the Static State, we find Rousseau in a complete fog as to the sanction on which that State shall rest. He invents the theory of the "general will," in the power of which shall lie the property, life, and liberty of the individual. He seems to have anticipated no dangers in the power given to the "general will." He thought that as men always desire their own good, they could not possibly be unjust to themselves, and that a body cannot wish to injure its own members. The social brotherhood was the inevitable result of equality and liberty, bringing the blessings of fraternity to his Utopia. The "general will" thus created is all-powerful, and all forms of political

parties or associations that might limit that power are forbidden. The executive Government is merely the instrument of the general will; its members are the agents of the people, its officials and clerks. Even Rousseau, however, maintain as he may that the general will is always right, seems to have had some doubt as to the inherent wisdom of the multitude. Granted that those who have to obey the laws should be the authors of them, yet the mob that desires good may not be able to discern it; the "general will" that is always right may be guided by unenlightened judgment. Hence the need of a legislator, a person of superior intelligence, probably a philosopher, such as Plato had long ago suggested. We here detect some distrust of the "general will" whose power has just been established, and the whole fabric of liberty, fraternity, and equality seems to fade away into a very ancient device for obtaining the mob's obedience to laws that have been imposed upon them by some one wiser than themselves. This evasion of his own principles becomes even clearer when he begins to consider whence the legislator is to obtain his authority. He finds himself confronted with the equally ancient paradox that men, in order to approve the sound maxims of their legislator, should be, prior to the laws, what they ought to become by means of them. It is impossible that the social spirit, which is to be the work of the institution, should preside over the institution itself, and we find Rousseau searching in

vain for his authority, discarding force and reason, and at length reduced to sighing for that intervention of heaven, by which, as we have seen, the identical problem was solved by Moses and Aaron in the dawn of history.

Leaving the problem of the legislator's authority unsolved, Rousseau proceeds to deal with his next difficulty, the authority of the executive Government. He sees that the whole people cannot remain in perpetual assembly to attend to public affairs, which is the logical outcome of pure Democracy. He also sees that, although it is expedient that the wisest should govern the multitude as in an aristocracy, it is possible that the wise will govern for their own advantage, and substitute a corporate interest for the "general will." There is no such thing as a simple Government. A monarch must have subordinates; a popular Government must have a head. Rousseau comes to the conclusion that the question as to which is the best Government is insoluble. One thing only is certain, that the Government, whatever it may be, will conflict with the sovereignty of the "general will," it will attempt to weaken the general constitution by strengthening its own, and it will tend to sacrifice the people to the Government, instead of sacrificing the Government to the people. The "general will," which should be the strongest, is always the weakest; the corporate will, which should be the weakest is always the strongest. Rousseau proposes, therefore,

that, as soon as the Government usurps the sovereignty, the social contract is broken, and the citizens regain their natural liberty. At all costs the sovereignty of the people must be maintained. To maintain that sovereignty the service of the State must be the principal business of the citizens. They must march to battle, not pay the troops and remain at home; they must go to the council, not elect deputies and remain at home; they must ratify every law in person and coerce the executive Government by the general will.

It never seems to have crossed the mind of this philosopher that a majority could abuse its power. The majority are often wrong, and its will is in conflict, not only with the will of the minority, but very often with the rights of the individual. The "general will" that can do no wrong is a mere figment of the imagination. But the "general will" was a most valuable idea to the Conservative thinkers who followed after Rousseau. From it they were able to derive once more the principle of State idolatry. It is very difficult to distinguish between the "sovereign people" and the sovereign State, the one is so easily metamorphosed into the other. The people may be sovereign enough in theory, but they can be manipulated, they can be corrupted, they can be deluded, they can be stripped of everything but the illusion of their sovereignty. We have seen the deluding and manipulation of the sovereign people undertaken in a most thorough and efficient manner by the Prussian

State. "Liberty," says the German historian Sybel, "is a strengthening of the power of the State by a patriotic coöperation of the people in all the duties of the State." That sounds very well; every Socialist would adhere to such a definition. Yet the vast campaign of training and education on these lines, to which the German people were subjected by the State, taught them merely the superiority of the German race and the value of militarism. "The State," says Mr. Gooch, summing up the views of Treitschke, "stands high above the individuals that compose it, and it exists in order to realize ideals far above human happiness. This it can only do if it is strong. It is no part of its duty to inquire whether its actions are approved or disapproved by its subjects. International law is a mere phrase. Treaties are a voluntary self-limitation, and no State can hamper its freedom of action by obligations to another. It must be ever ready for war, which is wholesome and elevating. War is not a necessary evil, but an instrument of statesmanship and a school of patriotism. It is idealism that demands a war, and materialism which rejects it. The State is Power. The idolatry of the State has reached its logical conclusion in the elevation of force to the sovereign principle in national life and international relations." The "sovereign people" believed in all this. Blinded by their patriotism and their ideal of service to the State, they allowed the socialistic militarism of Sparta, the national militarism

of Rome, the military imperialism of Cæsar, the military efficiency of Frederick the Great, the political ethics of Machiavelli, and the biological ethics of Nietzsche to be accumulated, consolidated, and organized, and then in a vast crescendo hurled against the wall of liberty, hurled against, and broken to pieces by, those nations of the West that held a Liberal view of life and progress.

In our own time we have thus seen the "general will" of the "sovereign people" led to such enormities by State idolatry. Worship of the State has an unsavoury history. So much wickedness has been performed in the name of the State that we may well distrust a man who proposes that service to such an ideal shall be the basis of his static political construction. Such a man is the German Karl Marx. In his hands the idol is decorated with the trappings of democracy, and idealized by the ethics of social service. None the less we are asked to make the old surrender of our individual life, to immolate ourselves at the ancient altar. Before we bow ourselves down before the German idol of State-Socialism, we shall be wise to ask ourselves who are the priests that lurk within the recesses of the temple, and what they will do with our obedience when they have obtained it.

Liberalism is bound to oppose all forms of Conservative idolatry, since its concern is the increase of individual liberty. Freedom, to those who worship the State, means nothing but the rights of citizenship, an entire

subordination of the part to the interest of the whole. There have been many strange definitions of liberty, even stranger than the crimes that have been committed in its name. The Persians who followed Cyrus the Great thought they saw freedom in his absolute despotism. The Spartans, restrained at every turn, unable to choose their wives or their food, unable to educate their children or even to speak as nature intended them to, considered themselves the most glorious of the products of freedom. The Romans, like the Prussians, marched forward to conquer the world in the firm belief that their militarism was the finest product of civilization, although their religion was unimaginative and their literature unimportant, while we cannot even remember the names of the soldiers who made their empire, so uniform in pattern are they, so devoid of distinctive personality. No trace is to be found among these State-worshipers of the mighty intellectual development of the Athenians, who always sacrificed the whole to the part, the nation to the town, and the town to the citizen, and who believed in leisure and inefficiency. Freedom of thought and action was the keynote of the Athenian democracy. All its political development only served to intensify individuality at the expense of authority. Only the Athenians were intelligent enough to see that the good of the body, as distinct from the good of the members, can be made too important. Human development rather than national

development must be our political objective; laws and states exist merely for the purpose of increasing the private happiness of those who live under them and in them. They are not and cannot be an end in themselves. The Reformation succeeded in removing the Conservative idol that was preventing human beings from attaining freedom of thought. The State has, however, usurped the throne of Jehovah, and a new Luther is needed to throw down that idol also and give freedom of action to humanity. Democracy has shown in its short history a tendency towards that freedom which it is the business of Liberalism to encourage. But Democracy, like Christianity, or any other Liberal movement, runs the danger of solidifying into a system and of losing its impetus towards freedom. German philosophers have put the snare of a Static State before its feet. German philosophers have tempted it with the poisonous fruit of organized power. German philosophers have mystified it with the golden idol of the State. It is the work of Liberalism to see that Democracy does not fall a victim to the Conservative decadence which must always be the result of idolizing the State.

CHAPTER IV

STATE CONTROL

THERE is something rather pathetic in the vision of Democracy demanding to be controlled by the State. It can only be compared with the lamb asking to be eaten by the wolf. Do they think the State does not wish to control them? Do they imagine that there is any conceivable Government machine that is not eager to make that control complete? When once a system of Government has been devised and is in operation, it is only by ceaseless vigilance that it can be prevented from being despotic, however Liberal its intentions may be. As for the Static State, we know that, based on a denial of progress and a low view of human virtue, it is essentially created to control us, and history proves that, once it has obtained some form of idolatrous sanction, it immediately proceeds to do so. The true Conservative will, if he can, leave hardly any action or any thought to the independent volition of the individual. This is not only because he has a contempt for the individual, but also because he himself is possessed by that instinct for power against which the desire for

liberty is in perpetual conflict. It is amazing to notice, for instance, in the laws of Moses how intimate the inquisition is, how close the control over the private life of the individual. You are commanded not to eat rabbits or hares; or not to eat anything that dies of itself, adding the somewhat worldly and truly patriotic advice that you can give to a stranger, or sell to an alien, what it is sinful for you to eat yourself. Combined with details as to the proper way to go birds'-nesting, we are advised by divine authority to put a battlement on our roof in case anybody should fall off it. Every natural temptation is remembered, and even the human instinct to "curse the deaf" comes under the ban. We are not allowed to plow with an ox and an ass together; although no mention is made by the all-anticipating and all-sufficient lawgiver of the motor-tractor. Linen and wool must on no account be mixed in our clothes, but, perhaps as a consolation, we are forced to wear fringes to our garments. These are not the most important items of the Mosaic law, no doubt; there are other more imperative ideas of permanent justice and unchanging humanity. A stubborn son, for instance, is, at the instigation of his parents, to be stoned to death.

The instinct for power invariably falls in this manner upon the submissive and obedient individual, whether that instinct is represented by Lycurgus or Karl Marx, Cæsar or Louis XIV. The Russian Czars have displayed these characteristics in so crude a form that

their antithesis to liberty is obvious. The Roman Republic, on the other hand, like the modern Socialists, was astute enough to cover with the gloss of efficiency and morality the tyranny of the State. But in every case, whether secret or avowed, the object is the same, to dictate to men what they shall do, in the same way as a theocracy dictates to them what they shall think.

According to Socialist ideas nothing could be more perfect than the Spartan system that was described in the last chapter. Lycurgus firmly believed that arrogance and envy, luxury and crime were to be stamped out, and that merit would be the only road to eminence. The division of land and private property was certain, in his view, to produce an equality that would do away both with want and superfluity. The abolition of gold and silver, and the introduction of iron money which foreigners would not accept, could not fail to do away with luxury. The prohibition of gold would not only stop all trade and commerce, but even lawsuits would cease. The outlawry of all needless and superfluous arts would prevent corruption. No one was allowed to travel in case he should pick up new or different ideas, and no stranger was allowed to enter the city in case he might introduce bad habits. Wealth, of course, would not exist, and the effort to obtain it would soon cease to receive honor or respect.

The Socialism of Sparta was, of course, based on slavery. The dirty work even of a socialistic world

has to be done by somebody, and in Sparta it was done by slaves. But even so the complete control of the State became intolerable to those whom it controlled. Corruption and luxury crept in slowly through the barriers of tyranny; the severe discipline was evaded; and the paternal legislation of Lycurgus could not be made to function against the inert but genuine desires of men for liberty and pleasure.

The aristocratic constitution of the Roman Republic was widely different from the socialistic polity of Lycurgus, but it shared with it the Conservative instinct for power. The revolutions of Roman history, those which transformed the city from a monarchy to a republic, and later on from a republic to an empire, were Conservative revolutions, utterly devoid of any enthusiasm for liberty. The veneration for authority was too deeply instilled into the Romans for any such enthusiasm. The façade of republican equality was only a formal pretense, disguising the control of the aristocratic families. True Liberalism never existed in Rome. The law was strict and overwhelming, and the official classes, as is always the case where the State is supreme, exercised a vast control over the manners and habits of the individual citizen. Beginning with religious anathemas, the control was eventually maintained by the creation of offenses against order. The word order, generally bracketed with law, has always been a useful weapon in the hands of a State bureau-

cracy, and the police laws of the Roman Government, combined with the power of the censors, gave the Senate an almost unbounded measure of arbitrary power. Luxury and immorality may be bad things; it is no doubt a serious matter for the State if people neglect the cultivation of their land; but State interference with such sins is always fatal to the liberties of men. Public order, and even public spirit, may be increased by it, but it is at the expense of individual freedom.

The real spirit of liberty never appeared in Rome; no genuine Liberal Party ever guided her destinies, taught her nobles the meaning of progressive politics, or her mob the sober duties of Democracy. From the beginning to the end power resided in the State machine, and the only political development displayed was a class-war for the control of that machine. For long centuries the Conservative administration displayed all the vaunted virtues of efficiency and maintained an unimpaired supremacy. But when it ceased to be efficient, when its officials became corrupt and luxurious, when genuine pride and honor gave place to covetousness and intemperate personal ambition, it showed no trace of adaptability, not even a realization of its own decay. Before the attacks of a greedy and unpatriotic middle-class, and of an equally greedy and untrained lower-class, it resisted to the last, and when it fell there was nothing but despotism to take its place. Such was the political failure of State control. Its

moral and intellectual failure was equally great. Greek culture and Greek ideas, so productive in the great age of Athens, so Liberalizing in their influence during our own Renaissance, brought to Rome only the vicious frivolity of their own decadence. Rome under the influence of Hellenic art produced, not the Shakespeare of free England, nor the Michael Angelo of the free Italian cities, but a feeble and imitative art and literature. At the same time the austere life of the primitive community was corrupted and orientalized; luxury and superstition replaced the ancient virtues of the Roman citizen. The restriction of individual freedom and the narrow range of permitted action produced among the people an aversion to work and the habit of idleness. The populace of Rome, unaccustomed to liberty, uneducated in political affairs, was to all effects and purposes a licentious mob, open to the highest bidder. Servility on the one side and flattery on the other is hardly the basis of sound government. Every idler in the street began, like the followers of Rousseau in Paris, to talk about the "sovereign people," while at the same time selling his vote for money. Popular amusements, games to see, and bread to eat, was the continual cry of the demoralized rabble. The Static State, unable to prevent deterioration, had denied for centuries the processes of political development. The nobles had forgotten to serve the State, but they had no new ideals of liberty to put in the place of those they

had lost. The people had forgotten to obey the State, but they had no desire to replace their lost obedience by an ordered Democracy. The nobles were obviously unfit to govern, but the untrained rabble was not fit to take their place. A degenerate aristocracy found itself, just as in the France of 1789, face to face with an undeveloped Democracy. Thus when reform became imperative, it also became impossible.

Such is the nemesis of the inflexible Static State. Those who control it refuse, not only to progress, but even to compromise. The control of the State machine, so gratifying to the instinct for power, will never be surrendered; it can only be forcibly seized.

The story of the fall of the Roman Republic is full of interest and value for the statesmen of our time. In the first place, it is curious to observe how, during the ebb and flow of party strife, every political leader from Tiberius Gracchus to Brutus maintained strenuously his devotion to liberty. Madam Roland, during the French Revolution, exclaimed with horror how many crimes had been committed in that name, and we can deduce from its perpetual use how well aware the men who lead the world were and are that liberty was and is the instinctive desire of the human race. In the second place we find that the Revolution was the result of the political failure of the Roman oligarchy to deal with two problems that are identical with ours to-day, that is to say, their failure to accommodate liberty

with empire and liberty with wealth. It was the evil effects of empire and wealth upon the character of the people, uncorrected by any tendency towards either national liberty for the Empire or individual liberty for the people, that made the constitution unworkable and revolution inevitable. In the third place we find that the revolution that culminated in Cæsarian despotism was no more recognized as Conservative than Socialism is now. Innovation is very apt to appear radical; the Conservative classes oppose revolution not necessarily because its proposals are Liberal, but merely because they are new. All the opposition to Cæsar came from the Conservative classes; all his support came from the demagogues and the populace. The latter could not see the absolute negation of liberty to which Cæsar's policy led; no vision of Nero floated before their eyes as they assisted to lay the foundations of the all-powerful Universal State.

Cæsar himself was perhaps the greatest man who ever lived. So diverse a combination of abilities has never existed in the human brain. As soldier, statesman, lawgiver, jurist, orator, poet, historian, grammarian, mathematician, and architect, Cæsar has claims to greatness, and his intellect was little superior to his character. Charm, humor, courage, energy, moderation, and magnanimity were combined with an entire lack of priggishness, meanness, or conventionality. Yet it is curious to observe how even the unique great-

ness of this wonderful man was unable to do more than carry out the inevitable tendencies of his time. He could, and did, destroy what was ripe for destruction; before his blows the Roman oligarchy fell as completely as the equally rotten French monarchy fell before the blows of Rousseau. But when he came to the more difficult task of construction he found himself faced with a people utterly unprepared for liberty, and he was obliged to surrender before the logic of facts all the Liberal ideas of his youth, and to substitute for them the despotism that such circumstances made inevitable. A people such as the Romans were only fit for despotism. Like the Germans after them, they had always been an imitative people. The religion they had borrowed from the Etruscans, and the culture they had borrowed from the Greeks were only a veneer that covered their primitive militarism. That militarism was based on State control and the complete denial of natural rights. A people who for many centuries had been accustomed to be obedient to control, the control of the master over the slave, the control of the husband over the wife, the control of the father over the children, the control of the oligarchic State over the citizen, were difficult if not impossible to lead towards progress and liberty. But the very denial of natural rights and the tradition of control that made this difficult were on the contrary the natural foundation of the Universal State. It was on these moral foundations that Cæsar began to build

the Conservative edifice that his successors completed. They produced a Conservative system by which all legislative and judicial powers were concentrated in the person of the emperor, and all administration centralized in the hands of permanent bureaucracy. The marvelous structure of the Universal State could adapt every class and every enemy to its constitution. Christianity, Hellenism, and even barbarism could not resist its embrace and were absorbed within it. Yet it is an excellent commentary on the so-called freedom of the Roman Republic that it was converted into an absolute monarchy without any essential change in the framework of the Constitution. It is only another proof that the vaunted freedom of the republic was as great an illusion as ever the freedom of Sparta had been. No doubt the Romans were comparatively free, if that comparison is made with the Oriental despotisms they saw in operation on their frontiers. But no trace of real individual liberty existed in the Roman Republic, and the change from the republic to the empire was in truth nothing but a change of masters. When the corrupt and decadent oligarchy had been replaced by the efficient administration of the Cæsars, and the transfer of power, which was all that was in question, was complete, it is doubtful whether the individual noticed any loss of liberty. The State had always been in power, and the State still was so: the ordinary man was not much affected by the question as to which particular

pair of hands should hold the reins and run the machine. But if the individual did not lament a liberty which he had never really possessed, and which no one had ever intended that he should possess, he did genuinely prize the return of law and order that the triumph of the Cæsars produced. No Conservative State provides its subjects with the hope of liberty, and the Roman Republic was no exception to the rule, but every Conservative State rests its appeal to humanity upon the production of law and order, and for generations the Roman Republic had produced nothing but tumult and civil war, combined with proscription of life and wealth. The Cæsars offered peace, and there was no class of the community that did not delight in that magic word. The provinces saw the prospect of strong centralized administration curbing the cupidity and luxury of their governors. The Roman people saw the prospect of continual free subsistence and free amusement provided by the State, and no need to fight any longer in the ranks of the legions. As for the higher classes, they behaved as they always do and always will after every Conservative revolution, be it despotic, or be it Socialist, they scrambled for the emoluments of civil employment, for the soft places and honors that were in the gift of the hands that controlled the State. No one foresaw that Augustus, so cool and passionless, so wise and moderate, might be succeeded by the ferocity of Nero. Cæsar brought peace and efficiency.

It has often been said that a benevolent despotism is the most perfect of all forms of government, and we are apt to forget that it is the benevolence and not the despotism that excites our admiration. The benevolence of Cæsar rarely reappeared among his successors, and, although the Universal State may sound like a millennium under his control, it seems very different under the control of Caligula. Nor could the artificial construction of the Universal State be productive of either liberty or progress; on the contrary, for two thousand years it constituted a reaction against both.

The evils that State control produced in Sparta and Republican Rome are inevitable and inherent, and yet the instinct of power is so strong that the Conservative mind refuses to admit them. Imperial Rome suffered exactly similar phenomena of decay, yet Charlemagne, faced like Cæsar with political anarchy and a world anxious for peace and order, was captivated by the tradition of the Universal State. The ordered system dominating the individual, the efficient uniformity, appealed to that love of organization that was so conspicuous in his Teutonic character. The Conservative system of Charles is only a reproduction of Mosaic sanctions and Spartan efficiency grafted on to Roman traditions. State centralization, State authority, State idolatry is the recurrent feature of every Conservative system from Lycurgus to Karl Marx. The political history of the Middle Ages is made up, firstly, of an effort

to preserve the power of the Universal State against the rising spirit of nationality that was endeavoring to get free from it, and secondly, of a struggle for control between the Emperor and the Pope. Each side in that fierce and prolonged controversy was obsessed with the desire to control the Universal State, and, by the mere weakening effects of that internecine Conservative struggle, immense impetus was given to the idea of nationality. As the Universal State decayed the races that composed it took the opportunity to obtain their racial independence. The monarchs that achieved this independence had no conscious Liberal ideas, and their love of liberty was merely race prejudice and race ambition. No sooner were they independent than they, too, became eager for power; they could not shake themselves free from the long tradition of State control. They were quite prepared to prove that they were the successors of Cæsar, the heirs of his controlling power. The national liberators had no idea of individual liberty, and, national freedom once obtained, proceeded immediately to imitate the Imperial idea, to centralize their Governments, and to erect around themselves the ancient Conservative system. Not only, as was shown in the last chapter, did they proclaim their divine right, but they adopted the ceremonial of Imperial tradition, endeavoring in every possible way to stabilize the monarchical institution and retain control over their subjects. This process of monarchical concentration,

accomplished at the expense of the Empire and the Papacy abroad and at the expense of the feudal barons at home, had ultimately merely the effect of replacing the Conservative Universal State by local Conservative monarchies. The Kings were just as tenacious of their control as ever the Emperor had been, and the substitution brought very little increase of individual liberty. These Valois and Tudor kings were out for themselves, out to obtain power and control, and to replace the Emperor and the Pope at the head of the system. They were to be the State, as Louis XIV said, and it never occurred to them that any liberty was due to the individual.

Yet once again the evils of State control produced in France exactly the same results as they had in Sparta, in Republican and in Imperial Rome. The French monarchy, which succeeded in stamping out the Liberal movement of the Reformation and in effectually establishing its despotic control, was confronted in 1789 with all the phenomena of decay both in their nobility and their populace that we have noticed as characteristic of Rome in the time of Cæsar.

It is hardly surprising that Hobbes, engaged in writing his able defense of monarchy and looking back to the persistent traditions of the long Conservative past, should have thought that power is implied in the very idea of government, and that the political crisis of his time was merely a struggle to obtain it. Was he so

wrong? Does not Parliament now hold all the sovereignty that monarchy then possessed? The idea of State control has survived the fall of many kings. Some form of sovereignty, call it what you may, some form of expert body, guard and curtail its powers as you may, must exercise authority; a mere crowd cannot govern. This, in the present stage of our evolution, is of course true, but it is the tendency of institutions that has to be watched. The conflict between Charles I and Pym may have been a struggle for power rather than a struggle for liberty, but Hobbes is profoundly wrong in drawing the conclusion that Democracy is essentially not different from monarchy. The tendency of Democracy towards liberty is far greater than that of Monarchy. It is far less Static and far less idolatrous. But Democracy, like every other political device, if we are not careful to lead it forward towards liberty, will inevitably move backwards to reaction. It also will solidify into a Static system; it also, having erected some idol as a sanction, will organize its control. The Conservative German philosophers have been endeavoring either by means of militarism or by means of Socialism to make Democracy a Conservative institution, on exactly the same lines as Constantine dealt with the Liberal movement of Christianity. They have set up the Rights of the State in contradistinction to the Rights of man, and have endeavored to create a national individuality which would overawe and

suppress the human individuals that compose it. The militarist school have gleaned the glorification of the State from every source of history. The super-State of Treitschke—based on the theory that the State is Power—is the product of this Conservative attempt to organize Democracy. But the State of Karl Marx is no less a product of the same idea.

Socialism in its economic and democratic subsidiary meaning has a modern appearance, but in its essence as State control it begins with the beginning of politics and is as old as the world. Sometimes in history the control of the State is wide, sometimes it is narrow, but always, even in the free Democracy of Athens, it has been present. There is nothing therefore essentially original in the socialistic idea of State control. Moses, when he contemplated the Israelites worshiping the golden calf, came to the same conclusion that Karl Marx did when he contemplated the luxuries of modern capital, the conclusion that the idleness of human nature can only be controlled by a strong central authority. The communistic militarism that Lycurgus laid down for Sparta, the aristocratic militarism of the Roman Republic, and the despotic militarism from which Cæsar evolved the idea of the Roman Empire, much as they varied in detail, shared the basic idea of State control. The controversies in the Middle Ages between Church and State, between Guelph and Ghibelline, between the ideas of Charlemagne and Hildebrand,

were bitter and profound, but neither side in that controversy repudiated the idea of State control; they only differed as to whose the hands should be in which that control should lie. The effort to escape from State control has always been the sign of liberty; the effort to enforce State control has always been the sign of Conservative reaction. It was the denial of the rights of the State over the human soul that prompted Caiaphas the Pharisee to crucify Christ, that prompted Nero to persecute the early Christians, that prompted Constantine to subtly embrace the Liberal forces of Christianity within the system of the empire, and that prompted the Popes to fight to the death the flood of the Reformation. The fundamental determination to control by means of the State the actions of mankind does not vary and remains Conservative. The amount of the control varies widely in the course of history, so does the nature of the control, but the idea of control itself does not. The amount of control varies from the comparatively light yoke of Charlemagne to the devastating absolutism of Louis XIV; the nature of the control varies from the communism of Sparta to the despotism of Peter the Great, but the Conservative idea of control itself, be the State what it may, remains the permanent basis of Conservative thought.

Let this be granted, it will be replied. Socialism, in so far as it postulates State control, is Conservative in thought. But the great difference between the State

control suggested by Karl Marx and the State control that you have traced through history is that the former is allied to Democracy. Socialism, as laid down by Lycurgus, may have been Conservative, but democratic Socialism is not. In the meantime mankind has become free. It is the illusion of freedom that has given Socialism its hold on the human mind. Once more it cannot be too forcibly stated that this idea of achieved freedom is an illusion.

Democracy is not liberty, although it is a nearer approach to liberty than the political systems that it has superseded. Democracy was a transfer of power, valuable and liberal, because it contained that tendency towards liberty which is the test of all political movements. But power is the antithesis of liberty; its exercise is the orign of tyranny. Democracy, when it inherited power, inherited a Conservative instinct, an instinct which is bound to conflict, and is conflicting, under the guise of Socialism, with the Liberal tendency towards liberty.

It is the duty of Liberalism to help Democracy to overcome the Conservative instinct of power in whatever form it may manifest itself. The power of capital, created by the great development of industry, and the division of the community into a small number of wealthy and a huge multitude of laborers, is one of them. The power of intellect, concentrated into a natural aristocracy and organized into the party system,

is another. But in addition to the opposition of money and brains to the idea of liberty there is the even greater danger of the re-introduction of organized State Control, which goes by the name of Socialism.

The theory of the French Socialist Babeuf that everyone should be forced to work was enlarged by Fourier into the theory that every man had a right to demand work and wages from the State. The logical progression of these notions led to the proposal of Louis Blanc that private property should be completely abolished by means of the regulation, organization, and control of all industry by the State. The French, however, were too tired of philosophic revolution to look with favor on these new-fangled Rousseaus, and Socialism owes its vast scientific extension to the Conservative mentality of German professors. They desired the Government to be so constructed that it could do everything; they had no instinct that it ought to be restricted so that it cannot injure the minority, and above all so that it connot deceive the majority from whom it is supposed to derive its power. Socialism is based, as a Prussian system would be, on compulsion. In Italy, where divorce is difficult to obtain, Liberal opinion has lately been enthusiastic over the decision of a judge that absence of children was a sufficient ground for annulment of marriage. But the Socialist view was that absence of children ought to make annulment of marriage compulsory. Here we get the direct cleavage.

The liberty for childless people to get divorced if they wish to, is a Liberal idea; the Socialist claim to force childless people to get divorced whether they wish to or not, is a Conservative idea. Interference, regulation, organization, and compulsion in the supposed interests of the personified State, but for the real gratification of the instinct of power in the superior persons who are running it, is the essence of Socialism.

There is, of course, just as there was in Republican Rome, great talk of freedom in these days. Shakespeare thought that his England was free; so did Horace Walpole; so did John Bright. We can see the limitations of those freedoms. Mr. Lloyd George probably thinks we are free to-day; Mr. Smillie does not think so, but he thinks we shall be free to-morrow when his schemes are in operation. The truth is we have never been and are not free; we are only moving towards freedom. Many people thought that Rousseau's discovery that though man is born free he is everywhere in chains was so potent that its mere enunciation would set us free. But the chains of ignorance and selfishness are not so easily disposed of. Much valuable fruit was obtained from the tree of Rousseau's thought, but do not let us be blind to the limitation of our success. The poor, no doubt, are not so helpless as they were, nor are they so poor. At least the patrician half of the laboring world have improved their condition and increased their power. During a recent general strike in America

some college professors who volunteered to do the work of the strikers found that their pay as miners was far larger than their pay as teachers. The plebeian half of labor, for labor, like every other body, has produced this natural division, is still in a bad way and have not shared the increase of wealth and power. And, taking it broadly, it is still true that the people do not govern, and have no consistent control over events. Ways have been found to evade the logical outcome of Democracy, and the people are deceived by names and catchwords into believing themselves the repository of power. We are told that in America the negro has the franchise, but we know that he is not allowed to use it, and that the white man polls the black vote in addition to his own. The people of New York are supposed of their own free will to prefer to be represented by Tammany Hall; but we know that the efficient organization of indirect corruption, working in countless ways among the people, giving them jobs, helping them to get coal and drink, assisting them to escape the police, has kept the city for years safely in the hands of those clever enough to finance the operations of Tammany. Those of us who with lots of principles, but very little money, have endeavored to "nurse" an English constituency against the weight of the indolent check book opposing us know how strongly the chains that Rousseau spoke of are still round us. Brains and money are a powerful combination and have always been so.

Mr. Webb and I know all about the machine of brains and money that secretly controls Democracy. We know how the independent candidate is squeezed out, and the subservient one supported. We know how the freedom of the press is organized and used to lead popular opinion in a prearranged direction. We know how the voter, universally enfranchised and assisted by the secret ballot, has really but the illusion of choice, a choice of evils. Let us be frank about these things, for no one will read this book except people who are "in the know" already. Two intellectual coteries have since 1832 been managing as directors the company of Democracy. I do not say that they have been entirely selfish; on the contrary, I believe that they represent a genuine intellectual division of the human mind. But their brains are the foundation of their power, and by their brains they have controlled events. A new intellectual coterie has arisen, which I have personified by the name of Mr. Webb. How does it differ from the old ones? We must not be deceived by names. We know that when Lord Northcliffe thunders in his hydra-headed press that "the country demands the resignation of Mr. Asquith," he merely means that Lord Northcliffe and the intellectual coterie that he represents have talked it over and decided that it is time they sat in the director's seat. So when Mr. Webb says that "Labor insists that the community shall control industry" what does he

mean? He means that Mr. Webb insists that Mr. Webb shall control industry. I am not for the moment discussing the merits of Mr. Webb's scheme of government. I am merely nailing down the obvious fact that Labor, since it emerged as an entity, has been led by the brains of an intellectual coterie, who marshal for it the complicated details of political economy, who tell it what to ask for and when to ask for it, who plan and direct the political campaigns, as a General Staff commanding a bemused army of private soldiers. If the campaigns are successful, it will not be Labor that is victorious; the General Staff will dictate the peace terms. It may well be that Mr. Webb is correct in his belief that the peace terms that he will dictate will benefit mankind; that does not alter the fact that it is a struggle for control, and that power in the hands of Mr. Webb is only another proof that at present we have not succeeded in finding a method by which brains can be prevented from governing the crowd of individual nonentities we call mankind. As the prospect of victory has drawn closer Mr. Webb has become disturbed at the diminutive size of the intellectual coterie that proposes to govern a quarter of the globe. The dumb instinct of the manual laborer seems to have warned him of the dangerous change that was taking place in the Labor Party; to have warned him that to open the party doors to brains was to let in a very ancient master, and he has endeavored to resist. But

Mr. Webb was on the horns of a dilemma. He knows perfectly well that by appealing for intellectual help he is altering the entire conception of Labor as it was originally laid down; but on the other hand he also knows that a mob of manual laborers are incapable of administering, not only the economic and political changes that his intellectuals are preparing, but even the ordinary but complicated machine of modern civilization as it is to-day. So, as his supremacy approaches, he has been "winking at 'Omer down the road," imitating the methods of many previous bands who have set out to redeem the world, preparing the instrument of power against the day of its accomplishment. It is obvious that, much as we have advanced towards liberty during the history of mankind, Democracy has not rid us of the dominating machine.

Conservative thought from the time of Moses and Lycurgus, through the Roman Republic, the Roman Empire, and the Roman Church down to the autocratic monarch has been concentrated on the necessity for the creation of, and the maintenance of, a dominating machine. Socialism has inherited that Conservative idea from its Germanic founders. Instead of endeavoring to diminish the power of the State over the individual, instead of endeavoring as far as possible to mitigate the natural dominance by which brains and money control Democracy, they propose to increase the power of the State machine. It is true that their machine is going

to dispense with money as one of the ingredients of power; nevertheless they openly admit that they intend to increase the power of the State over the individual and to control the people by the organized dominance of brains. This is premeditated reaction to a Conservative principle.

Liberalism is bound, not only to resist the Socialist reaction by which the State is to be in the control of brains, but also to resist the Conservative tendency in Democracy itself by which money and brains are obtaining a power so dominant that by it the liberty of the individual is endangered. The whole effort of Liberal thought has been, and should be, to weaken the dominance of the machine, to gradually decrease the control of the State, and to elevate mankind to be independent of both.

CHAPTER V

IMPERIALISM, WAR, AND REVOLUTION

WHAT Rousseau called "the love of ruling" is one of the ancient vices of humanity. The whole edifice whose construction we have been examining, the disbelief in progress, the contempt for mankind, the Static State, and the idols that give it sanction, has been built up from time immemorial to gratify that selfish passion. To control others is pleasant to the egoism of the superior person. It sheds a limelight about his superiority, enables him to expand himself before the public eye, to spread his tail like a peacock before his less heroic admirers. Those who worship the State have always endeavored to produce this hero type, representing their own Conservative egoism. Alexander was not the first of his kind, nor was he destined to be the last. He was the descendant of dim Egyptian Pharaohs and obscure Assyrian conquerors. His sword had been used before: Memphis and Nineveh and Babylon had felt it, and no one had wielded it more efficiently than Cyrus the Great. Cyrus destroyed with ease, not only God's chosen people with their Mosaic

traditions, but also the civilization of Babylon, a culture preëminent for two thousand years, from which had arisen the elements of all our knowledge. His son Cambyses did the same for the ancient civilization of Egypt. The futile victories of these Persian conquerors read to us as mere aimless destruction; yet men from Alexander and Ghengis Khan to Napoleon and Wilhelm II have imitated their policy and refused to realize how ephemeral the power of their militarism is bound to be.

Imperialism is the inevitable child of State idolatry, and the idea of the Universal State, which is the objective of Imperialism, has had a long supremacy over Conservative thought. The barbarous instinct for power, with its grim belief in the right of the strong to devour the weak, has only lately given way before the Liberal idea of national liberty. And even now the very people, who admit the right of the small nation to exist free of the Universal State, deny the individual the right to exist free of the nation.

There is a curious resemblance between the history of England and of Athens. By the mere accident of the Persian attack on Greece, Athens obtained her Empire and her maritime supremacy. By the accident of the attack on Europe by Spain, France, and Prussia, England has obtained her Empire and her maritime supremacy. The idea of the British Empire did not spring from the heated brain of philosophy; it was not the monstrous child of science and organization. Em-

pire came to England partly by the accident of settlement, partly by the accident of wars waged for a purely European purpose. The English aristocracy had to evolve out of its inexperience an Imperial policy and to adapt it to the Liberal ideas of their own country. They saw, just as the Athenians had seen, that Imperialism and Democracy could not easily combine, that the Conservative idea of Imperialism was in direct contradiction to the Liberal idea of Democracy, and, in true English fashion, they endeavored to compromise by the adoption of a Conservative policy abroad and a Liberal policy at home. The English people could not realize the possibility of parliamentary tyranny. They could not believe that the House of Commons, having inherited the powers of the monarch, had also inherited its capacity for oppression. Democracy, just as much as monarchy, and just as much as Socialism, has a Conservative instinct for power, which it has to learn to limit and control. Democracy had to learn, from the failure of its policy during the American Revolution, that liberty abroad is as necessary as liberty at home. Unlike the Athenians, England succeeded in liberalizing her Empire. She, the enemy of all Universal States, could not herself be the master of a Universal State, even if that State was outside the confines of Europe. The principle of liberty cannot be confined to Europe, and England began in Canada, in Australia, and in South Africa, slowly and cautiously, the process of en-

franchisement. We can observe England in these actions endeavoring to apply abroad what she had found to be successful at home, and at the same time justifying in her own eyes the possession of her world-wide Empire. In her case there was to be no servile imitation of Alexander and Cæsar. There was no Prussian talk about the propagation of culture, and the military basis was entirely lacking to the Imperial structure. There was not even to be a reproduction of the ideas of Charlemagne and Hildebrand, since there was no centralization of power and no insistence upon authority and obedience. The Empire was not to be Conservative: it does not satisfy the instinct for power, since our power over it does not exist. It is free, and we are speaking of States now, not of individuals, because the English State has no control over it.

It is the business of Liberalism to contend against the spirit of Imperialism everywhere. It must support the right of all small nations, from Ireland to Armenia, to be free from the control of their larger neighbors. Lord Curzon, and Lord Milner, or anybody who wishes to first expand themselves into Prussian supermen and then expand their country into a Roman super-State, are Conservatives as dangerous to liberty as Mr. Sidney Webb and Mr. Smillie.

At the same time we must refuse to be logical, refuse to elevate even Democracy into a scientific system. What is good in politics cannot be universally applied.

America, in this case following too closely the logical and scientific systematization she had imbibed from Rousseau, extended her constitution to include a backward race of West African negroes. She was not content to rightly set them free from slavery; she was in a hurry to be logical, and, by assuming they were equal to her own citizens, to give the negroes what they were not fit to use. Time has proved that philosophic theories fail to face the facts of life, and the liberty that the negroes possess on paper has never been realized in actual practice. Liberalism, following the dictates of political evolution, must feel her way cautiously towards progressive political steps in India and Egypt. The tendency towards liberty which the Empire contains, and which is the sole justification of its existence, must be encouraged and continued in every practicable direction.

But Imperialism is a dying Conservative idea, large as has been the place which it has held in history. The national conceit and race prejudice which underlie its advertised patriotism excite nothing but contempt in the modern mind. We do not admire Pharaoh in these days. He despised the inferior civilization of the Hebrews in the way that a Turk despises an Armenian, and his manner of dealing what he calls "wisely" with the subject race is similar to the reactionary Anglo-Indian manner of dealing with a Bengali. He is always in a state of fear that they are not sufficiently kept

under, and that in case of a war they may make common cause with his enemies. And his only idea of their mission in life is that they should work, combined with a firm belief that they are idle. Imperialism, like theocracy, is oriental in its primitive origins, and the occidental races are learning to rid themselves of both by losing their idolatrous admiration of the supermen who organize them. The effort of our pro-consuls to act the part of Scipio Africanus appears to us more of a joke than a danger. Yet it remains important to remember that State idolatry and State control are the parents of Imperialism, and that those who deprive the individual of his liberty will sooner or later deprive the nation also. The instinct of power has to be continually watched; we have to guard our liberty against reaction. We must never forget that the Conservative mind will seize any excuse and any opportunity to replace upon us the fetters of the past, to whittle away, to stultify and corrupt our small measure of achieved liberty. Men are afraid, and they are told that the only way to obtain security is in a Conservative organization for defense. Men are greedy, and they are told that they can only satisfy their appetites by a Conservative organization for aggression. Men are ignorant, and they are told that the only shortcut to the millennium is a Conservative organization for revolution. But it is not only the weaknesses of humanity that are used for the purposes of reaction. Patriotism, love of fame

and glory, self-sacrifice, honor, have also their Conservative advantages, and all the noblest instincts of men have been continually perverted for their own undoing.

The principal lesson that Liberalism can learn from history is that violence, whether it be the violence of war or the violence of revolution, is the certain prelude of reaction. Continual self-indulgence in the egoism of war has always been fatal to liberty and progress. Disastrous as are the external effects of Imperialism, the internal effects upon a people that pursues such a policy are not less fatal. Conservative races that have concentrated upon war and specialized in the production of soldiers, such as Sparta and Rome and Prussia, have been obliged to surrender as a tribute to the God of war every other attribute of the human mind and character. The elevation of military despotism into a social system is the great invention of the Spartans. Men must have some outlet for their energy, and if you deny them the pursuit of wealth and the production of art, you will no doubt turn them into magnificent soldiers. The wonderful flower of the Greek intellect could not bloom in the Conservative soil of the Spartan constitution. Communistic efficiency hands down to us only the names of lawgivers and soldiers. Everything that springs into our minds when the name of Greece is mentioned came from the individualistic Athenians. The narrow and unworthy ideal of Sparta, pursued with persistent selfishness and

complete disregard for the rights of others, denied entrance to all the wise tendencies of change and progress without which a nation is bound to decay. Sparta, like Rome, was corrupted by her own victories; victories that entailed the destruction of Athens.

The Conservative State, making war the basis of its national life, has always destroyed itself by so doing. But war has been no less fatal to the rare examples of Liberal communities that are to be found in history. The government of Athens was probably the nearest approach to complete individual liberty that humanity has as yet achieved. Unfortunately, there was one Conservative idea that Athens was not civilized enough to escape, and that was potent enough to destroy her. Her prowess in the Persian Wars had placed her at the head of Greece, and she could not resist the temptation of converting her leadership of the Confederacy into an Athenian Empire. Her allies became dependents, subject to tribute in the place of service. But the inevitable consequences of ruthless Imperialism were not slow to appear.

Athens took no pains to create affection in her allies, or even to convince them that her empire was advantageous to their interests. An overweening pride in her power, an insistence upon obedience, and a systematic gathering of tribute, were the outward evidences of empire. No doubt her rule was far milder than that of Sparta afterwards, but the system of unprincipled

aggression that she practiced seemed intolerable enough at the time, and the retribution of her Imperialism was the vast disaster of the Peloponnesian War. The Athenians might assert that their Imperialism was accidental, that "fear was their first motive, afterwards ambition, and then interest stepped in." They might even descend to using the ancient Conservative argument so familiar to the Romans and so pleasant to their Teutonic imitators that "the world has ever held that the weaker must be kept down by the stronger." The words leap at us from the pages of Thucydides with all the Laconic force that has carried them down to Machiavelli and Nietzsche. They are the essence of the militarist idea, in reality so contrary to the Athenian character that the demagogue Cleon, obliged continually to remind the liberty-loving Athenians that their empire was a despotism held down by force, is justified in his assertion that "a Democracy cannot manage an Empire." These arguments were no defense. Even the fact that the struggle between Athens and Sparta might be construed as a conflict between the democratic and oligarchic form of government was no valid excuse for the foreign policy of Athens. However much Athens might label herself a Democracy in her fight against oligarchic Sparta, she could not deny the fact that her external and Imperial policy contained no element of liberty, in the sense that English Imperialism has contained it. Her despotism may not

have been a harsh one, but nevertheless it was a despotism. There can be no question that if Athens had not indulged in war she would have been as able to defend herself and her priceless civilization against Macedonia as she had been against Persia.

In the Middle Ages the states of disunited Italy reproduced, by a freak of fortune, the Liberal Independence and intellectual vigor of Athenian Greece. Unfortunately the liberties of these Italian cities were neither stable nor permanent. The lessons of liberty are hard to learn, and it is the refusal of men to learn them that gives Conservative theory its continual opportunities of control over thought and action. The Athenians were, indeed, so far superior to the men of the Renaissance in that they understood that order, being essential to civilization, is therefore one of the main pillars of permanent liberty. The fierce struggle of political factions and the continual disorder that they produced made republican self-government impossible in the Italian cities, and invited the strong hand of the despot.

But apart from the weakness of internal disorder the Italian cities shared with Athens a complete inability to realize the fatal influence of war upon liberty. Like the Greek cities, they fought interminably with each other, endeavoring continually to enrich and aggrandize themselves at the expense of their neighbors, and in reality only so weakening themselves that they fell

an easy prey to external militarism. The idea of confederation, of union for defense, they had not the capacity to realize. They were satisfied to enjoy their precarious liberty, created, as it was, merely by the accident of the Imperial struggle with the Pope. Machiavelli, Conservative and Prussian as he was in his ideas, was right enough about the need for unity. Yet the very character of the cities, and their equally right conception, voiced by Guicciardini, that their local independence was the source of their civilization, made such unity still more difficult to obtain. The political failure to achieve local independence without war and disorder deprived Italy of her position as the Liberal leader of Europe. The intellectual and artistic glory of the Renaissance departed, and she sank back for centuries into the ineptitude of Catholic reaction.

It is because men cannot tolerate disorder that revolution has again and again led directly to Conservative reaction. It was because Cæsar offered peace, security, and tranquillity in the place of chaos that the Roman people consented to the construction of the Imperial despotism.

The crying faults of the Republic had been tyranny in the provinces and anarchy at home. These faults the Imperial Government removed, and their removal was the justification of the Conservative revolution. The Romans admired the peace they had achieved at the expense of liberty. The fusion of the great Empire

into a vast political uniformity, the efficiency of the State machine as an implement for the production of peace and prosperity, and the complete absence of a political alternative for that machine, kept the organism alive in a condition of static inertia so powerful in its limpet strength that for centuries no effort was made to destroy it. No attempt to obtain liberty ruffled the Roman peace; even the desire for liberty, the great motive-force of human progress, was swamped under the organization of efficiency. So strong was the hold of this ordered government, this perfected legal and political system, on the human mind that even the war-like barbarians, whose militarism was strong enough to overturn the effete armies of Rome, had nothing but respect and admiration for the institutions they attacked. They also, like the Christian bishops, had not come to bury Cæsar; they merely wished to step into his shoes, to perpetuate his system. And the very chaos that the successive waves of barbarian invasion produced prompted Charlemagne to once more stabilize the organization of the Universal State. It was the desire for a stable Government, growing slowly during the wild times of those chaotic centuries, that enabled the Carlovingian Franks to reëstablish the Empire of the Cæsars. In those turbulent times the desire of mankind was for peace and order, and, far from looking forward to new ideas of government and progress, they invariably looked back to the ideal age of Roman peace.

The culture of Charlemagne was Roman, Roman in its ordered system, in its effort for uniformity, and its determination to place the system before the individual. And the whole work of Charlemagne was organization, the using of the Imperial prerogative for the coördination of all that remained of wealth and knowledge, with a view to the revival of order and culture.

Violence is a bad parent to the child of liberty, producing fear and reaction, and preventing the orderly processes of evolution. In the modern history of France war, revolution, and reaction alternate with each other and form a vicious circle from which the essential Liberalism of the French has only lately escaped. The wars of Louis XIV produce the blood-stained Revolution of 1789; the violent Democracy of the Revolution produces the Cæsarian despotism of Napoleon; the wars of Napoleon produce a reaction against both disorder and militarism that is personified by the Congress of Vienna and the Holy Alliance. All through the nineteenth century it was clear how the violence of the Revolution had benefited the forces of reaction and prevented the progress of Democracy. France was tired of kings and emperors, tired of absolutism and militarism, but she was equally tired of philosophic revolution, and it was her fear of a repetition of the Terror that gave Louis-Philippe and Napoleon III their unstable monarchical opportunities. In America it was far different. No sooner was the

war of independence over than the cautious Anglo-Saxon spirit began to build on the ruins of the Revolution. The enthusiasm of Jefferson was replaced by the practical spirit of Alexander Hamilton. In the period of construction every effort was made to curb and restrain the power of the achieved Democracy. The Revolution of the Constitution of the United States is remarkable, not only for the careful compromises with which it was constructed, but for the fact that those compromises were arrived at on the immediate morrow of revolution.

Liberal England has always displayed a profound repugnance both for militarism and Bolshevism. Her fleet has been throughout her history a defensive force for employment against the militarism of others. Her own revolution in the time of Cromwell not only produced the usual monarchical reaction and delayed the advent of Democracy, but, like Bolshevism, resulted in the tyranny of an armed minority, a tyranny hateful to ideas of liberty inherent in the English people. The English learned from Cromwell two very important political lessons: firstly a hatred of religious zeal which prompted them to ever-increasing tolerance during the eighteenth century; and, secondly, a hatred of a standing army which enabled them to resist the conscriptionist movements of the nineteenth century. It was this Liberal tradition that inspired Burke to welcome the American effort towards independence, and to ful-

minate against the blood-stained Bolshevism of the French Revolution. Chaos and disorder, whether caused by war or revolution, are the troubled waters from which the superman will always extract a basketful of wriggling imperialisms. Liberalism can only justify war when it is waged against the superman and the superstate. "Prusso-Germany," says Admiral von Tirpitz sadly, "was the creation of individual men, who demanded and secured the fulfillment of duty and the subordination of the individual to the interests of the State." We have forced the Admiral to write in the past tense about this socialistic militarism. The people who look upon politics as an art have destroyed the people who were drilled to look upon politics as a science, and they succeeded in doing so because, to quote the words of General Maurice, "The essential difference between the mind of Foch and the minds of the German Generals was that he regarded war as an art, not as a science."

But it is the business of Liberalism to settle disputes without war, and to obtain reform without revolution. There are adventurous spirits in all countries who believe in catastrophe and convulsion as a method of progress. Prussianism, whether in its militarist or socialistic phase, is not confined to Prussia. Lenin and Lord Fisher are the brilliant apostles of this confused belief in catastrophe. As long as we believe in wars we are forced to produce Lord Fisher to win them for us;

as long as we believe in revolutions we are forced to produce Lenin to organize them for us. And the former will desire to imitate the ruthless methods of Nelson at Copenhagen, and the latter will desire to imitate the bloody methods of Robespierre in 1794. Socialism, like every other variety of the Static State, presupposes a clean slate, and a clean slate is only to be obtained by revolution. And very clean indeed, washed clean with a bloody sponge, that slate will have to be. The desire for individual liberty is too ancient an emotion in mankind to be extinguished without resistance, and the economic theories of Socialism demand universal application as the first postulate of their practicability. Men will resist the encroachment of State Control; they will disobey the bureaucrats that are set over them; they will refuse to work for the benefit of the salaried officials who will haunt in thousands the vast network of Government Departments. As Bentham saw very clearly, there is no object in saving or working if we are to be robbed of the results, and only what is necessary for bare subsistence will be produced. Industry under such conditions would be foolish, if those who are idle are to be kept by the State and provided with a high standard of life. What can the State do if I am idle? Misfortune and stupidity have been ruled out by philosophy as legitimate causes of misery. Is idleness to be ruled out too? If not, what happens to the wife and children of the idle? And

how many bureaucrats will be required to discover the obscure psychological difference between idleness and stupidity? It seems probable that if the official inspector does not like the color of my hair he will decide that I am idle and not stupid. A vast power is in his bureaucratic hands, a power far vaster than the isolated employer's, since the organized amalgamation of Government departments lies behind him. Will he follow the example of Trotsky and deprive me of State food until I become obedient? Or will he degrade me to a more arduous and disagreeable job?—for it must not be forgotten that this official is the arbiter of all patronage, that the distribution of all work from that of a judge to a crossing-sweeper is in his hands. It is not surprising that Bentham thought that "one half of society would not suffice to regulate the other half." However impossibly virtuous and uncorrupt the bureaucracy may be—and these are not the attributes that spring into the mind when officialdom is mentioned—if I have an idle temperament I shall hate the man who tries to force me to be industrious, and I shall feel towards him as a schoolboy does towards his master. And I shall not be alone in my hate. Those who have been told off to do the dirty work of the world—dirty work that has to be done, and which nobody will want to do—will be on my side. Those who are envious and who are ambitious, and are not satisfied with the work they have been given; those who feel they have been

unjustly treated and cannot obtain redress, for officers in the army tell me that such things have been known to occur even under the beneficent jurisdiction of a War Department; those whose love of personal liberty is greater than their admiration for social efficiency, will form a company so powerful that force will be required to put them down. The revolution that cleans the slate will therefore, as in France and Russia, be followed by a Terror instituted against those who refuse to conform to the new ideas that are to be written upon the clean slate. It is bound to be so, because otherwise the scientific scheme will refuse to work, and the philosophers would be discredited.

War will follow close upon the heels of revolution and terror, as we can deduce from the French and Russian prototypes. The nations which are afraid of the example will attempt to stamp out what they will look upon as a dangerous disease, and no doubt they will fail to do so. But the Socialist State, drunk with the glamour of its own revolution, will not be able to resist the armed propagation of its ideas. All through the revolutionary years in France we find the clamorous desire to impose Rousseau upon Europe by force of arms, and the Bolsheviks have never disguised their intention, if they could, to overrun the world. Such procedure will be all the more necesssary to the Socialist State, owing to the fact that their economic thesis will be unworkable if it is not universally applied. The

State that stands out of the system will attract to itself all the wealth and trade of the world. Capital and brains will fly to its standards, and the danger of economic collapse and extreme poverty will force the Socialist State to overturn its capitalist rivals.

Liberalism is opposed to evolution by catastrophe; on the contrary, it believes that catastrophe is the ally of Conservative thought, and the foundation of reaction. The imperialism of Lord Curzon, the militarism of Lord Fisher, and the revolution of Mr. Smillie are all based on Prussian ideas, imbibed from Charlemagne, from Frederick the Great, and from Karl Marx. To these we oppose the necessity of liberalizing the Empire by widening the measure of independence and self-government; the necessity of removing the menace of war by the establishment of the League of Nations; and the necessity of curbing the power of capital by methods that have a tendency towards liberty rather than towards bureaucracy.

CHAPTER VI

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND ACTION

THE short years of recorded history on which alone we can build up our understanding of humanity have been occupied by the continual struggle of the majority to escape from the control of the minority. When on the 10th of December, 1520, Luther burned at Wittenburg the book of the canon law, he created himself the founder of that Liberalism which has been the motive power of our modern age. Luther, pious, superstitious, utterly untouched by the Renaissance, was destined, almost against his will, to be the instrument that destroyed the work of Constantine, and set free Christianity from the control of the Conservative machine. It must never be forgotten that it was not the Catholic Church but the Papal Government that Luther attacked. The medieval Church was an international State, organized like a modern bureaucracy, and it was against the financial, industrial, and moral misgovernment of that international organization that the missiles of the reformers were directed. It is curious to observe how little the men who promoted and led this campaign

against the Papacy were aware of the vast revolution their actions were preparing for mankind. The monkish and narrow mind of Luther, full of anxiety for the primitive religious faith of Christianity, had no conception that he was the forerunner of freedom of thought, the man who was to make Voltaire possible in the world. Henry VIII, proudly determined to step into the shoes of the displaced Pope, contesting not for freedom but for power, had no vision of his actions leading direct to the extinction of divine right upon the blood-stained scaffold in Whitehall. The Reformation destroyed the Universal Church. That colossal fabric, built up around the simple fisherman from Galilee, for fifteen hundred years had dominated and controlled the minds of men. First in alliance with the successors of Constantine on the throne of the Roman Empire, then in alliance with the successors of Charlemagne on the throne of the Holy Roman Empire, she had realized the dual theocracy of Universal State and Church, which was the theory of the Mosaic law. Then she had destroyed the Universal State and reigned alone. Great are the names connected with her dominion; Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, and Hildebrand, the Conservative pillars of her gigantic growth. Nor must we forget the gentler side of her intellectual power, Fra Angelico, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Catherine of Sienna. But we must not, on the other hand, be blind to the fact that her efficient control, based on obedience and authority, was a complete nega-

tion of liberty in the individual. She was as Roman as she called herself, inheriting from the Romans ideas of State control over human thought and action. She destroyed the freedom of primitive Christianity and bound the Liberal ideas of Christ into the confined and regulated boundaries of her doctrine. The test of all State-systems is their treatment of the individual, and whether they will allow him to be free. The inclination of men who obtain the power to govern is to use that power for the purpose of controlling not only the actions but the thoughts of men. Moses had so used that power, and so had Lycurgus. The Roman Empire and the Roman Church had made that control the basis of their system, because they believed it to be the essence of all government. It is the strongest illusion of the Conservative mind. Even the Athenians, the only people before the Reformation who tolerated freedom of thought, found the conversation of Socrates almost as intolerable as Caiaphas found the teaching of Christ, or as Pope Paul V found the astronomical conclusions of Galileo. The Reformation released the human mind from the thraldom of censorship and inquisition. It enabled men not only to believe what they wished to believe, but also to speculate upon the problems of science and philosophy. All modern knowledge, all modern invention are the fruits of that freedom. In the realm of thought since 1690 mankind has been free. But it must never be forgotten that State idolatry is the

foundation of mental slavery, and that Conservative systems do not differ in their desire to control men, and their methods of doing it. The Socialist workman who refuses to print the political opinions of Lord Northcliffe has the same instinct as the Catholic priest who places the writings of a heretic upon the Index.

The Socialist State will be obliged, according to its thesis, to destroy the Capitalist Press and the Capitalist basis of art and literature. We shall be wise to ask ourselves whether the State newspapers will be anxious to print articles that conflict with its policy or that attack its administration. It may quite possibly be that the bureaucrat who is examining such an article will contrive to lose it among the rabbit-warren of branches into which he will have divided his business; or, at any rate, his instinct will prompt him to decide that such an article is not what the public wants. What will be the attitude of the State publishers when confronted with a revolutionary manuscript? Surely, it would not be surprising if he discovered in it faults of style and general lack of literary quality that would force him, most reluctantly of course, to discard it in favor of a Conservative treatise on the same subject. We ask ourselves what sort of man would be appointed to the position of vast power that would be inherent in the office of deciding on what was and what was not to be printed. Perhaps it would be a Board of the old and eminent, on the basis of the gentlemen who select

the pictures for an Academy Exhibition. We know what chance the new idea, whether it be pre-Raphaelite or Futurist, has of recognition, even when merely the tradition and sentiment of the age is called into question. But the State will be consumed by jealousies far deeper and more urgent than these. The instincts of fear and self-preservation will prejudice the decisions of this disguised censorship. Perhaps it will be a single eminent man of letters who will be the despot of State literature. The Editor of the *Quarterly* will have a power over John Keats far greater than that of criticism; he will be able to refuse to print the "Ode to the Nightingale." Can we conceive an Oxford Don deciding to publish the atheisms of Shelley, or the Duke of Grafton passing the *Letters of Junius* for publication? It is not necessary to speculate on the fate of Swift, or Wilkes, or Horne Tooke at the hands of a State publisher; we can visualize the procedure accurately enough if we imagine the manuscript of Mr. Keynes's *Economic Consequences of the Peace* being surveyed by the myrmidons of the Coalition Government. We have had examples of late years of what occurs when, as in Germany, a Government Department is in complete control of the Press; and in a recent book we have been enlightened as to the readiness with which Mr. Churchill took to the manipulation and suppression of news under the protection of "Dora." Are we to suppose that the personnel of the Socialist State will be so unselfish and

altruistic, so different from men as we know them, that they will welcome the document that proves them to be incompetent idiots when they have the power to suppress it, a power which can be exercised in secret and against which there can be no redress or appeal? Lord Fisher says that "no private person whatever can hope to fight successfully any Public Department." The artist and the man of letters will beat in vain against the doors of State Control.

The Reformation gave us liberty of thought, but it still has, and always will have, to be maintained, not against the danger of sudden revolution, but against the more insidious encroachment of Conservative consolidation and organization. Christ liberated religion from the fetters of Mosaic control with which the Pharisees surrounded it. But in a few centuries the ecclesiastical and sacerdotal Conservatives had destroyed the Liberal meaning of Christianity, had erected the governing heirarchy of a new Aaron, had stamped out the freedom, not only of the individual Christian, but also of the local Churches, and had evolved the idea of a Catholic Church, uniform in faith and ritual, and as blindly obedient in spiritual matters to the Roman Pontiff, as in secular affairs the Empire was obedient to the emperor. A succession of brilliant Popes seated in a city that men were accustomed to look to as the capital of the world consolidated the jurisdiction of the Conservative, Imperial, and Catholic Church over the souls of men. It

is not surprising that the temporal rulers from Constantine to Charlemagne should have encouraged that political consolidation and desired to share in that spiritual jurisdiction. The cloud of State control settled down permanently over the mountain of liberty, and within that stagnant miasma we can only discern the constant struggle of Pope and Emperor and King for supremacy and authority. Luther dispelled that cloud, enabling the individual man to think, to write, and to believe as he wished. Let us beware of again surrendering our liberty of thought into the hands of a system, for State machines do not differ in their Conservative use of authority.

Liberty of action is more difficult to obtain than liberty of thought. It requires a higher standard of civilization, and the Conservative arguments for its denial are more valid. It is obvious that some form of government must at present exist. The idea of government was evolved unconsciously and developed slowly from the circumstances and necessities of men. Throughout history there has been a perpetual conflict between the desire of the individual for complete liberty and the necessity of granting to governments power to carry out their functions. The Conservative has always considered that the object of law is to restrain freedom; the Liberal that the object of law is to enlarge freedom. All those who have considered political philosophy have realized that the problem of government is

how to combine complete security with absolute freedom. Hobbes considered that they were incompatible; that liberty, which argues no check upon the passions and selfishness of men, could not be combined with the security that is provided by some form of sovereignty, call it what you may. He believed that all revolution in politics is only a struggle for power, and that all change in government, such as the change from Monarchy to Democracy, is only a change of masters. Like all Conservatives, he would, if he had lived to observe it, have looked upon the subsequent history of Democracy as a class conflict, under the stress of which the power has slowly moved from the aristocracy, through the middle-class, to the lower classes. He would not realize that to think on such lines is to mistake the streamlet of a temporary phenomenon for the main river of human endeavor. If such an explanation were true, the years in which we live, and in which the lower classes have achieved power, would be the conclusion of political progress, since there are no further classes to which the power can pass. We should be obliged to share the philosophic delusion of Comte that progress is accomplished, that by "the law of three stages," the theological, the metaphysical, and the positivist, the last had been reached in the Victorian age, and that it only remained for men to settle down forever under an achieved civilization by which the capitalists would be the temporal and the philosophers the spiritual leaders

of mankind. Even Socialists, intent on their own scientific system, will pause to shudder at such a consummation. Instinctively we feel that these finite and terrible conclusions are false, since they are as Static as Socialism itself, and since they deny the existence of those natural rights on which all individual liberty is based. The denial of natural rights and the substitution for them of nothing but legal rights based on utility or security leaves, not only property as the Socialists imagine, but liberty itself at the mercy of the majority. Hobbes put too high a value upon security, and Locke and Rousseau, by leaning to the side of liberty, have anticipated that modern compromise by which we obtain to a certain extent both security and freedom without completely obtaining either. But it is our business to obtain both completely. Mill was right in his conclusion that by a wider diffusion of civilization human character could be indefinitely improved, and that knowledge and culture would teach us the art of life. Democracy is not, said Mill, "an end in itself," and he clearly discerned the essence of progress in the passionate plea that he made for the largest possible allowance of freedom, both from the yoke of opinion and the yoke of law.

This idea of liberty of action sprang fully armed from the brain of the Athenian people. Very short were the great years of Athenian liberty, but during those years a high sense of political morality was developed among

the people under the ægis of freedom. In every direction the character of the people flourished and strengthened. Herodotus says that the proof that freedom is an excellent thing is that the Athenians, while they continued under the rule of tyrants, were not a whit more valiant than any of their neighbors, but no sooner had they shaken off the yoke than they became decidedly the first of all. Similar effects upon human courage will be remembered as the result upon the French of the Revolution of 1789. But it was not only the quality of courage that was developed by liberty. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the notorious intellectual and artistic production of the Athenian people, which has remained the unsurpassed wonder of the world. But in addition to this the Athenians solved the political problem of combining complete freedom with unbounded criticism. They learned to obey authority, and yet to control and censure those who were exercising it. They learned to be free, and yet to refuse the minority the right to overturn the constitution.

Modern languages have no word to express the Greek *isonomia*, which signified that perfect equality of all civil and political rights which was the fundamental notion of the Athenian Democracy. That equality was the product not only of energy in public and private action, but also of a deep affection for the constitution in the hearts of the people. It was their love of the liberty they had achieved that enabled the Athenians

to throw back into Asia the barbarian invasion of the Persians, and that prompted them to adorn their city and to sing its praises. The political freedom that the city enjoyed was the keynote of its individual life. It used to be the fashion of Victorian writers to discover in the social life of Athens what are unfortunately the universal vices of humanity, vices that existed also under the smug hypocrisy of the nineteenth century. No doubt men are not quite so cruel, nor women quite so much in subjection as they were two thousand years ago. We have also, but quite lately let it be observed, abolished the slavery on which unfortunately the liberties of Athens rested. But the difference between the slave and the wage-earner is not so great that we can afford to boast of our superiority. We have removed the slaves, but we have not yet solved the problem that slavery presents, the problem of getting accomplished the menial and dirty work of the world without depriving the man who does it of dignity and leisure. Slavery performed for Athens the drudgery of life, leaving the rest of the citizens opportunity for freedom, leisure for artistic and political pursuits. We have advanced so far as to say that liberty cannot be based on slavery, but even two thousand years have not shown us a satisfactory substitute for the slave. Also there can be no question that the Athenians, unlike the Romans, treated their slaves well, so that it may well be doubtful whether a wage-earner in an East End slum under

the dispensation of Queen Victoria was in reality any happier or any more free than an Athenian slave in the time of Pericles. The author of the *History of European Morals* has shown how dangerous it is to make ethical comparisons between the various phenomena of morality that appear in history.

The women of Athens no doubt appear to us to have been in a state of subjection, but perhaps very little more so than do the women of Europe in the eyes of a citizen of the United States. We are amazed, on the other hand, at the freedom and social recognition given to the courtesan in Athens, a phenomenon which must equally surprise the Mohammedan visitor to modern Paris. The Anglo-Saxons pride themselves to-day upon their liberty, and they are right to do so, for, although it is not complete liberty, it is, like that of Athens, the nearest approach to complete liberty that mankind has attained, and it has a tendency to increase. But our descendants, looking back on us as we look back upon the Athenian Republic, will no doubt marvel at the slavery we endured and moralize over the vices of our time. It is not pretended that Athens reached the summit of civilization, and that all that is necessary for salvation is to imitate her constitution. But there are certain ideals that arose in Athens for the first time and form the basis of the Liberal faith. To begin with, Athens repudiated, with the one fatal exception of Imperialism, all the ideals on which Conservative thought

has relied throughout the history of mankind. The principle of authority, of complete obedience to control, whether that control is exercised by God as in the Mosaic theocracy or by the State as in the Sparta of Lycurgus, never enters for a moment into the Athenian angle of vision. The right of the individual to think and act as he pleases within the wide limits reached by his culture and civilization is never denied by the Athenians. The State only interferes where it must; it is never the idol for which the individual must be sacrificed. More important still is the gradual growth of the Athenian Constitution from Solon to Demosthenes, adapting itself with practical opportunism to the growing political education of the people and the changing circumstances of the time. There is no sign in Athenian political history of an unchangeable system so necessary to the Conservative minds of Lycurgus, Cæsar, and Karl Marx. The Constitution of Athens was neither constructed by philosophers, nor run by bureaucrats, sufficient proof that it contained no Conservative foundations. It is interesting to observe that it was not till the later years of the Peloponnesian wars that Plato founded the first philosophical school, and that philosophy became a factor in the intellectual life of Greece. Even then there can be no question, as is evident from the fate of Socrates, that the Athenians like the English, had an instinctive dislike for philosophic inquiry, and that it had little influence upon their political life. In

fact, it was only in the decline of their intellectual and political vitality under the influence of war and Imperialism that philosophy became a power in Athens, and the real supremacy of the Hellenic philosophers is to be found later still in the city of Alexandria, long after the liberty of Athens had gone down before Macedonian militarism. In the absence of a philosophic system, and without the sanction of a Conservative idea, bureaucracy cannot thrive. Athens never fell into the hands of officials. When disaster overtook it in war it experienced Conservative revolutions in the direction of oligarchy, but as long as it remained a Democracy the blight of officialdom never was allowed to touch the flower of its liberty.

Athens, therefore, is the prototype of the Liberal State, the ancestress of Anglo-Saxon ideals. Her institutions possessed that tendency towards individual liberty which we have marked as the test of political ideas. England, America, and latterly France inherit from Athens the Liberal conceptions which have placed them in conflict with the systematized philosophy that Germany has learned from Sparta and Rome. From the earliest times England has displayed a passion for personal liberty that has fitted her to lead the great Liberal movements of the last three centuries. In ages when Conservative ideas were supreme in the world, and when she herself was not in a position to influence the events of the time, we find that passion prompting

her actions in the direction of liberty. Before any whisper of Reformation had been heard in Europe we find Henry II attempting to curb the power of the Church in the person of Becket. When we consider the monarchies of other countries, we are amazed at the rights that were obtained by the Great Charter of 1215. Despotism is a weed that never seems to have taken root in the soil of England, and, although its feudal monarchy shared in all the Continental movements of the time, sending its Richard to the Crusades, and attempting to enlarge itself at the expense of its French and Scotch neighbors, it was nevertheless a limited monarchy, always in contest with a spirited opposition, such as that of Simon de Montfort against Henry III. In the social troubles of Edward III's reign we find the English people, just as in matters of Church and State, searching for individual liberty, displaying in an amazingly early period their acknowledgment of the existence of Democracy, and obtaining rights in 1350 that the lower classes in France only obtained by revolution in 1789. From the time of Henry VIII the evolution towards liberty in England has been steadily maintained, and she has refused to cling to the worn-out doctrines of the Conservative past. By 1688 the power of the Pope and the King over human thought and action had been definitely removed and England was face to face with the new problems of Democracy. There was much to learn, and, indeed, there is still much to learn,

about the nature of Democracy, and its delicate adjustment to Imperialism and Industrialism. Broadly speaking, we can say that from 1688 to 1775 England was learning to be democratic, that from 1775 to 1840 she was learning to adjust the ideas of freedom and Empire, and that from 1840 to this day she has been learning to adjust the ideas of freedom and industrialism. But all through that long period of political education she has never for long lost sight of the fundamental necessity of liberty, which has been the inspiration of her compromises at home and her wars abroad.

The political party in England which goes by the name of Conservative, a name which it should hand over to the Socialists, has never, at least since 1688, been pledged to reaction. The English aristocracy has displayed no trace of that obstinate pride which ruined the Roman Republic. They were ready to learn the democratic lessons of the French and the imperial lessons of the American revolutions; and they were also ready to teach. As early as 1695 the aristocracy abolished the censorship of the Press, and the free discussion of social and political problems, the free criticism of policy and action, educated the people to a high degree of political capacity. This process of political education from below, combined with the theory of political expediency, originated by Walpole and developed by Burke, from above, enabled the English to broaden down from com-

promise to compromise, to choose out what was good and true from the dross of Rousseau's fantastic schemes, and to transfer the sovereign power first to the middle and then to the lower classes. The Conservative Party have no doubt been the drag upon the Liberal wheel, but they have never permanently denied the advance of the coach. Their insistence upon caution and prudence, their hatred of violent revolution, have, on the contrary, assisted the political evolution of the people. The English Conservative is moved by his heart rather than by his head; he has a reverence for what is old and beautiful, he hates to destroy and desires to preserve; he has a deep love for what has been built up by civilization in the primeval wilderness. He feels and does not think; he is afraid of people who think, because they so often think wrong. He believes that through him is transmitted the tradition of culture without which life is nothing and prosperity a snare. There is an infinite value in these beliefs if they are not combined with blind and obstinate obstruction. They are not dangerous to liberty, as is the static and philosophic political science that emanated from the narrow mind of Karl Marx, nor are they so essentially Conservative. They have not prevented the progress from pure monarchy to full Democracy which has been taking place since 1688, and which is now complete. They have given the Democracy an opportunity of preparing itself for the enjoyment of power.

The achievement of power, whether by an individual or a class, is not the end, but the beginning of political action. We must not be tempted to regard it like marriage in a fairy-story, after which nothing is left but to record the inevitable happiness. How is that power going to be used? It is unfortunately just as easy for a majority as it used to be for a monarch to be tyrannical. A majority has to delegate its power; to whom will that power be delegated? A majority that has not leisure to think and study may fall into the hands of rogues, of bureaucrats, of journalists, or, worst of all, of philosophers. Democracy has, in spite of its name, just as much tendency to divide into Liberal and Conservative Parties as any other repository of political power, and those who wish it to take a Conservative direction will, as they have in the past to others, tell Democracy that it can do no wrong. By use of the catch-words of liberty and progress they will try and convince the unlettered majority, first that the philosophers have discovered in Socialism the panacea of all evils, and then that the bureaucrats who are to run that scientific system are merely the obedient servants of Democracy. Just as patriotism was in the past the moral incentive by which men were made the tools of Conservative Imperialism, so in the future Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality are to be the moral incentives of Conservative Socialism. Democracy, like every other political device, has two roads on which it may travel, backwards

towards State control, or forwards towards individual liberty. That is the issue between the Conservative and the Liberal mind. It is the business of Liberalism to see that Democracy makes the latter its choice.

CHAPTER VII

THE PHILOSOPHERS

The English are a practical people, and one of the signs of their sound sense is their profound dislike of philosophers. They do not object to a man sitting at his desk and evolving out of his brain the solution of abstruse metaphysical problems; it is only when the same method is applied to what is called political philosophy that the Englishman becomes contemptuous and abusive. Political philosophy, or the science of politics, is a contradiction in terms, since politics is an art and not a science, and the attempt to make it a science has been responsible for all the evil that has resulted from philosophic speculation. If Rousseau had been content to attack the decayed monarchy of France and to sweep away its Conservative system; if he had been content to voice the bitter cry of humanity, born free, but groaning under its chains, then his voice would have been the voice of liberation, teaching truths that all communities must learn or perish. But like all philosophers, he wished to replace the monarchical system by a system of his own. Apart from his system,

his ideas were liberal enough, but it was the system and not the ideas that deluged France in blood. To him civilization was a disease; he wished to return to the simplicity that he falsely believed the life of the savage to be. Proclaiming the sovereignty of the people, he proposed that sovereignty should be used for the purpose of revolution, and that the objective of the revolution should be the return to an imaginary state of nature, a return to what the real science of anthropology teaches us to be the ignorance and poverty of primeval life.

The charming theory of the noble savage is admirably argued. The political philosopher, like the manipulator of statistics, can prove anything for you. Hobbes can prove Monarchy the best form of government quite as easily as Locke can Democracy, or Karl Marx Socialism. Machiavelli can argue you into tyranny as logically as Nietzsche can argue you into war. Yet the savage Robespierre did not appear so noble on close acquaintance, and the French got very tired of the "return to nature." The philosopher had never before taken a direct part in politics. The history of political philosophy, like every other product of the human mind, had its source in Greece, and in Plato we find that combination between abstruse speculation and complete misunderstanding of human nature which is typical of the philosopher. Plato, like the Socialists, did not believe in property, and, being logical, he extended his

communism to the wives and children of the citizens. He saw no reason why sexual intercourse should not be arranged and supervised by the State, and he considered it to be a practical suggestion that people should not know their own children. He believed, probably from profound contemplation of the domestic affairs of Socrates and his wife, that people would not quarrel so much if wives were held in common. And, on the strength of proposals showing so deep a knowledge of humanity, he actually suggests that government should be taken out of the hands of those who have it and entrusted to the philosophers. Fortunately it was only in the decline of Greek civilization that people listened to philosophy; it had had no influence on the political history of the great age of Athens.

It was not until the Renaissance that the curtain rose again on the scandalous history of political philosophy, and that the wise men sat over the midnight oil instructing us in the science of government. Machiavelli was a very different type from Plato, fitted to be the father of Treitschke rather than of Karl Marx. For four years we have been dealing with the logical results of Machiavelli's teaching, and it appears as if Lenin in Russia will give us an equally bloody experience of Platonic communism.

Machiavelli's prince was, according to Nietzsche, "the greatest example of a leader of men." What, then, are the views of Machiavelli's prince?

"It is necessary for a prince wishing to hold his own to know how to do wrong, and to make use of it, or not, according to necessity. For if everything is considered carefully, it will be found that something which looks like virtue will, if followed, be ruin; whilst something else which looks like vice will, if followed, bring security and prosperity."

"Our experience has been that those princes who have done great things have held good faith of little account, and have known how to circumvent the intellect of men by craft, and in the end have overcome those who have relied on their word."

"You must know that there are two ways of contesting, the one by the law, the other by force; the first method is proper to men, the second to beasts; but because the first is frequently not sufficient, it is necessary to have recourse to the second. Therefore it is necessary for a prince to understand how to avail himself of the beast and the man. A wise lord cannot, nor ought he to keep faith when such observance may be turned against him, and when the reasons that caused him to pledge it exist no longer. Nor will there ever be wanting to a prince legitimate reasons to excuse this non-observance."

"That war is just which is necessary."

"In time of peace never have anything in mind but the rules of war."

"He who becomes master of a city accustomed to

freedom and does not destroy it, may expect to be destroyed by it."

"The injury that is done to a man ought to be of such a kind that one does not stand in fear of revenge."

"War is not to be avoided, but only put off to the advantage of others."

Fortunately, the Italians paid very little attention to these diabolical notions, and it is only because philosophy appeals so strongly to the German temperament that we have to thank Machiavelli for handing down to Nietzsche and Treitschke ideas that have found their terrible fulfillment in Belgium and Northern France. This Prussiar habit of picking up ideas from foreign philosophers is equally responsible for Socialism. A Frenchman commits himself to a phrase, such as "Property is theft," an epigrammatic *réchauffé* of an idea familiar two thousand years before to Plato and Lycurgus, and it is eagerly taken up by Karl Marx and incorporated into a scientific system as disastrous to mankind as militarism itself.

There are two streets in London—let us call them Upper and Lower Streets—in one of which the upper classes live and in the other the middle classes. In the former every morning a motor stands before each house waiting to take the owner to his work; in the latter the owners have no motors, and go by underground. During the war Socialism was achieved, and no motors stood in Upper Street. On the other hand, outside

every door in Lower Street a State car stood waiting to take the bureaucrat to his work. Motors in Upper Street are theft; motors in Lower Street are Socialism; but the lower classes who live in Hunger Lane can be pardoned for failing to observe this nice distinction. Lord Revelstoke, running great commercial risks in the City and punishing himself by every mistake he makes, earns an income and buys with it a picture for his drawing-room; that picture is theft. Sir Eric Geddes, running no risks at all and only punishing his fellow-citizens by his mistakes, earns a salary from the Government, and also buys a picture; that picture is not theft.

The truth is that property is a natural right which cannot be ignored or denied. There are excellent arguments against property, just as there are for communal wives and children. In one of Massinger's plays the plot revolves on the protest made by outraged human nature against a law by which men are killed at the age of eighty. Now there are most profound and unanswerable arguments for such a law. It can be proved how useless such men are and how burdensome to the community, how they produce nothing and consume much. Such men are not efficient; on the contrary, they are what Socialists would call "a parasitic class." Yet, whatever philosophy may argue, we know that the old have just as natural a right to die in their beds as the young have to marry and bring up their own children.

In the same way we know that without property life would be intolerable and effort useless. The right to choose and own the coat we wear is a natural right; only the convict can be forced into State clothes.

This marvelous capacity for following a thread of thought to its logical conclusion, and totally ignoring what is humanly possible and what is not, is typical of the philosophic mind. There is a passage in Dostoevsky where the thinker who is plotting the Bolshevik revolution shows that he has realized the futility of exchanging Mr. Balfour for Mr. Sidney Webb. "A high level of education and science is only possible for great intellects, and they are not wanted. The great intellects have always seized the power and been despots. They will be banished or put to death. Cicero will have his tongue cut out, Copernicus will have his eyes put out, Shakespeare will be stoned. Down with culture! We've had enough science! Without science we have material enough to go on for a thousand years, but we must have discipline. The thirst for culture is an aristocratic thirst. The moment you have family ties or love you get the desire for property. We will destroy that desire; we'll make use of drunkenness, slander, spying, we'll make use of incredible corruption; we'll stifle every genius in its infancy. Complete equality! We've learned a trade, and we are honest men; we need nothing more. Only the necessary is necessary." In this prophetic speech we can discover that mad jumble

of philosophic tags stolen from Rousseau and Fourier and Karl Marx, which, festering in the minds of an uneducated rabble, has produced the red terror of the Bolshevik revolution.

These philosophers have reared a terrific brood of children. Robespierre and Lenin, Napoleon, Bismarck and Ludendorf. Yet undismayed they pursue their dangerous incantations, and from their armchairs let loose poisoned clouds of Prussian gas upon an ignorant world. No one would object if they left our complicated society, like Owen and Cabot, and set up their scientific system in the wilds of Illinois and Indiana, since then their consequent failure would not involve the collapse of our civilization. A man like Owen, who starts from the postulate that man is merely a chemical combination, is harmless as long as he governs the village of "New Harmony," but a disaster if he is allowed to control the British Empire. The materialism of Karl Marx and his insistence upon the economic basis of all social evolution drives him to the logical and ludicrous conclusion that men live by bread alone, and that religious and moral ideas have had no influence on civilization. He cannot disguise his hatred of Christianity, merely because it is a stumbling-block to his theory. The Socialist Stern draws a beautiful picture of the workingman drawing his clothing from the public stores, dining at the public hotel, or, if he prefers, having his meals prepared at home in a com-

fortable residence. But he entirely omits to tell us who will prepare the meals and wait upon this noble workman. Yet, in the entire absence of private enterprise, we know that the State will have to provide even the button on the workman's shirt. If we are not satisfied with the food at the State hotel we cannot go elsewhere, for there is nowhere else to go. If the State waiter is rude to us, we shall be as powerless to mend his manners as we are the manners of a telephone operator.

It must not be thought that the philosophy of Socialism is mere absurdity. The successors of Karl Marx have been pruning his conceptions and endeavoring to make his philosophy a practical system of politics. What was ludicrous and fanciful has been discarded, and every effort has been made to make it appear that Socialism is the only method by which the obvious evils of capitalism and industrialism can be removed. Yet even amid the dry economic detail of modern Socialism we can still detect the taint of the philosopher. What are the incentives that force a man to engage in uncongenial toil? I draw here a great distinction between congenial and uncongenial toil. There are many motives that will prompt a man to be an artist, a politician, a lawyer, or a bureaucrat that will have no influence in making a coal miner or a stoker on the *Mauretania*. I suppose it will be granted that the world cannot exist without the uncongenial toil of masses of men, and that,

however much we educate those masses, that necessity will remain. We know that men are now forced to do such work by the necessity of earning a living, the incentive of hunger. The Socialist State removes that incentive by guaranteeing to all men, fit and unfit, industrious and idle, a minimum standard of life. How, then, is it going to get the uncongenial toil performed? It will have no other alternative but force. It will be obliged to take away the liberty of choice and say to one man "You shall be a journalist," and to another "You shall, whether you like it or not, drive an engine." Only by this Conservative exercise of bureaucratic power will the work of the world be done. The Bolsheviks are an instance of how quickly the State is obliged not only to force men to work, but also to reërect the incentive of hunger by depriving men of food if they refuse to do so.

But let us suppose that the Socialist State is successful in forcing sufficient men to do the manual labor that is necessary. What then are the incentives that persuade men to give their lives to the more congenial tasks of brainwork? I am not referring to the few rare spirits to whom work is a second nature, but to the large majority of mankind whose instincts prompt them to the minimum of work, and the maximum of pleasure. It cannot be denied, I think, that wealth and all that it implies is, after hunger, the greatest incentive of energy and industry. The desire for pleasure, the desire to

provide for one's children, can only be gratified by wealth. The Socialist State will not allow wealth to be accumulated or inherited, nor will it allow luxuries to be produced. The brain-worker, therefore, will only exert himself to the extent necessary to get his status as a brain-worker recognized by the State. His purpose in life will be achieved if he can succeed in being chosen for congenial and not for uncongenial work. Beyond that he can have no possible incentive for energy.

Society will therefore be divided between an idle class of manual laborers, secure against hunger, and an idle class of bureaucratic brain-workers, secure in soft jobs that lead to nothing except a pension. Only a philosopher secure in his armchair against the realities of existence could have produced such a conception.

The advantage of Capitalism is that it maintains the incentive of hunger, and does not tolerate idleness. On the other hand, the moment Capitalism is selfish enough to refuse security against hunger to those who are not idle it lays itself open to the just and legitimate interference of the Liberal State.

It is here that the Liberalism of the nineteenth century was in error, since it, too, fell a victim to philosophy. The practical spirit of the English has rarely been influenced by the many philosophers they have produced. Hobbes published the *Leviathan* in 1651, the year in which the rights of sovereign and subject had been decided by Cromwell's victory at Worcester.

Locke published his *Treatises on Government* in the year 1690, two years after the complete fruition of the Whig policy. Philosophy was not a power; it was only the Poet-Laureate of political action. Unfortunately, when it came to the nineteenth century, Liberal Statesmen, instead of concentrating their efforts on dealing with the acute problems caused by the industrial revolution, listened to the philosophy of Bentham and were lost.

Bentham asserts that as long as government is useful we obey it, and, if we alter it, it is for the purpose of making it more useful. The test of a government's utility is its production of the greatest good to the greatest number, and this should also be the test of every action that a government takes. On this ground he defends private property and freedom of contract, and attacks the corrupt aristocracy that he saw around him. The true aim of government is the greatest happiness of the governed, and that happiness consists, according to Bentham, in subsistence, abundance, equality, and security. As regards the first two he does not think the State can interfere except to secure to the worker the fruits of his labor, and to protect him generally. The fear of starvation will produce subsistence, and the spirit of saving and accumulation will produce abundance. But he does not attempt to inform us how we are to measure the fruits of labor and how we are to decide on its distribution; it is not surprising therefore that the complexity of the industrial

revolution made his casual treatment of subsistence and abundance obsolete and absurd. His third postulate of equality becomes in his hands the instrument of an attack on the ideas of Rousseau and his Socialist successors. To Bentham equality meant equality of opportunity. The whole community, if destitute, should have the bare necessities of life assured to them, but absolute equality he considered would be an equality of misery, and would bring no increase of that happiness which he maintained was the test of political action. In addition to this, any change in the distribution of wealth in order to produce equality would vitally affect his fourth postulate, security, which he considered the most important of all. Security is vital to happiness, and he points to the misery produced by the destruction of wealth in war as an example of what results when security is suspended. Security is based on "expectation," on the belief that we can safely make plans for the future, and it is on this that he bases his defense of property. He maintains that property and law are interdependent, and that the law must not reduce to a nullity those expectations of enjoyment that it has itself encouraged. Civilized society is based on property; everyone participates in its advantages to the exact extent that their position now is superior to what it was in the savage condition of nature. Women, children, and the old have vastly profited by this process of civilization; population has enormously increased; and

all this must be attributed to allowing property, which is the reward of industry, energy, and foresight, to be secure. As subsistence and abundance depend absolutely upon this security, equality, which cannot be made perfect or maintained exactly, must yield to it. All that we can attempt to do is to diminish inequality by graduated taxation or by limiting the testamentary power. In any case there is a natural tendency towards equality in an industrial community, and the laws can assist that tendency by legislation against monopolies and protective tariffs. Here, again, Bentham, in painting the blessings of civilization, evades the vital point as to whether the working classes have received their fair share of those blessings, and once again the industrial revolution found him an inadequate guide to its perplexities.

It is quite clear that the ideas of Bentham will not suffice as an answer to scientific Socialism. The rival philosophers were too agile for Bentham, and they evaded his dilemma. Socialism quickly evacuated the extreme outposts of its position, surrendering the principles both of pure equality and of the complete extinction of private property. St. Just, attempting to erect in practice the theory of Rousseau, had affirmed that no one should possess more than three hundred livres; modern Socialism has long ago abandoned such a proposition. In socialistic theory all men do not have equal incomes; the State limits that income, and varies

it according to what it believes the work done deserves to receive. In fact, everyone receives a wage from the State. Over that wage he has complete control, except that if he saves money he cannot leave it to his children, and that, as the State controls all production, he can only buy with it what the State chooses to make. Nevertheless the pure equality of wage, against which Bentham brought such conclusive arguments, does not exist in modern Socialist programs, and private property, within the limits of what the varying wage will purchase, is allowed. Socialism, having destroyed Bentham's case by altering the premises on which it is built, proceeded to annex his theory of Utilitarianism. They protested that their system completely fulfilled his test of utility and would produce a far greater good for a far greater number than any other system. Subsistence, a sufficient abundance for those who condemned luxury, a sufficient equality for those who condemned privilege. As for security, who can be more secure than those who have nothing to hope for and nothing to lose? The Socialist State guarantees the four postulates of the Utilitarian philosophy. You will subsist fairly abundantly; no one will subsist much more abundantly than you do; and you will be secure in the possession of your fairly abundant subsistence.

From the usual fog that philosophy produces we can only obtain a view of reality by pointing out that the

postulates by which Bentham bemused the mind of Liberalism are false. No doubt the greatest good of the greatest number is a sound political objective; unfortunately it is not easy to discover what is the greatest good of the greatest number. Bentham thinks he knows, just as Rousseau thought before him, and as Karl Marx thought after him. All governments claim, and have claimed, to produce it, and it is therefore very little test of their utility. But utility itself is not the object of government. To assert that it is naturally approximates to Karl Marx's postulate of the economic origin of evolution and enables the materialistic Socialists to use Bentham as a support to the Static State. Utilitarianism, as conceived by Bentham, attracted the Liberal mind because the theory of the greatest good of the greatest number had a tendency towards individual liberty, in that from it could be extracted the necessity of overturning the parliamentary power of the aristocracy and opening the door of the suffrage to other classes of the community. But when Utilitarianism is handled by the Socialists its tendency towards individual liberty immediately disappears, and the instinct for power takes its place. We presume, of course, that Socialism intends the State to be a very benevolent and virtuous power, as indeed it would have to be if its business was to decide absolutely what is to be produced and who is to produce it. But whether virtuous or not, it would be power used for the purposes of Static control

from which all the incentives towards liberty and progress would be removed.

Once again we find the philosopher Bentham denying the existence of natural rights. Liberty, marriage, the family, property exist only for utilitarian purposes. Yet these natural rights exist, and it is the business of government to harmonize them with what is useful to the community. Bentham not only gave an impetus to Socialism by his ideas, but he founded the fatal school of *laissez faire*, which, by leaving industry to care for itself, enabled Socialism to assert that it alone provided a remedy for the obvious evils that were being produced. Let us repeat again what should be the Liberal position. The advantage of Capitalism is that it maintains the incentive of hunger, and does not tolerate idleness. On the other hand, the moment Capitalism is selfish enough to refuse security against hunger to those who are not idle it lays itself open to the just and legitimate interference of the Liberal State.

In every direction Liberalism must combat the instinct for power that Capital, no less than Labor, possesses. Whenever, by trusts, by monopolies, by tariffs, by illegitimate profits, by unfair rates of wages or hours of labor, Capital pursues its selfish interests to the detriment of individual liberty and happiness, it is the business of Liberalism to support the under-dog. It is its failure to do so under the guidance of a false philosophic theory that has forced Labor to protect

itself, and to believe that the selfishness of Capital can only be countered by the selfishness of Labor. It is its failure to do so that has created the idea in the Socialist mind that civilization is a class-war, a material conflict for power and the rewards that power brings. It is its failure to do so that has forced the Trades Union to inadequately perform for itself what Liberalism should have done for it. It is its failure to do so that has created the false idea that wealth in itself is evil, since it is the cause of poverty.

Trades Unionism is an army mobilized for defense in the inevitable class-war that Karl Marx foretold. We know about these inevitable wars so dear to the Prussian mind. There should be no need for such an army, if Liberalism itself consents to deal with Capitalism. For the Trades Union army, like all military bodies, is a wasteful force, struggling for two disastrous objectives, the destruction of wealth and the attainment for itself of the power to be selfish that Capital is now allowed by Liberalism to possess. It is a Prussian army, formed originally to obtain "a place in the sun" for Labor, but, feeling itself stronger every year, gradually losing its purity of object, and becoming tyrannical in its determination utterly to destroy its enemy, Capital, and to replace it in power and place. Even in these days of preparation, before the Armageddon between Capital and Labor takes place in which civilization may disappear, its armaments are expensive, since the strikes

and curtailment of output with which it consolidates its strategic position decrease the wealth of the community. For the second great advantage of Capitalism is the production of wealth. Civilization is built up upon wealth, and the more it can be increased the higher that civilization will be. Poverty existed before civilization; wealth did not. In our hearts we know that more wealth, and ever more wealth, is what we require, so that many of the luxuries of the rich can become the necessities of the poor. The poor are right to envy the rich, to envy the fuller and more cultivated life that wealth brings. But they are wrong to imagine that the seizure of the wretchedly small accumulation that constitutes the present wealth of the world, an inadequate sum denuded by war and waste, would give them that fuller life that they so impatiently desire. The theory of Karl Marx that under Capitalism the rich would grow steadily richer and the poor steadily poorer has been proved false by experience. The poor have shared in the results of the Industrial Revolution, their standard of life has been steadily raised, and this process has been especially marked in countries like England and America, where industrial Capitalism has been most powerful. But here again the *laissez faire* policy of Liberalism has omitted to keep a guard over the distribution of our increasing wealth, and has allowed Socialism to convince Labor that it is not getting, and will never get, its due share. The result has been the

inculcation of hatred against wealth and the popularity of the disastrous socialistic scheme by which every conceivable incentive for the production of wealth will be removed.

Liberalism should take no sides in the selfish controversy for power between Capital and Labor. It should support Capital, because progress is impossible without it, but it should prevent Capital from misusing its wealth. It should support Labor continually to raise its standard of life, but it should prevent Labor from misusing the Trade Union weapon. And its whole effort should be concentrated on forestalling the inevitable "war" for which both Capital and Labor are living in a state of costly "preparedness." The problem is merely one of Distribution. It is all to the good if the rich grow richer, as long as the poor grow richer in proportion. The weekly wage has got to provide more and more as the legitimate desires of the people increase, until there is so much wealth that the workman of tomorrow can buy for his toil what only the well-to-do of yesterday could afford. Time and the accumulation of wealth alone make this possible. But year by year the Liberal State can keep a watch upon Distribution. By means of its taxation statistics it is able to tabulate almost exactly the ratio by which wealth increases. The ratio should be made public, and the only difficulty that would require statesmanship would be the decision as to how much of the yearly increase should go to raise

the level of the minimum wage, how much should go to the Inland Revenue for public services, and how much should be left in the hands of Capital for the production of further wealth. The statesman will, of course, be obliged to prove the wisdom of his decision, since human nature will prompt both Capital and Labor to try and tip the balance in their own direction. But he will be able, by careful adjustment, to protect and increase the standard of life of Labor, and at the same time preserve the incentive which urges Capital to accumulate wealth. But to accomplish this, Liberalism must cease to be obsessed with the philosophic traditions that it so unwisely imbibed from Bentham. We get some idea of the dangers of philosophy when we realize that while Bentham is teaching English Liberalism the glories of *laissez faire*, Treitschke is teaching Prussian militarism the glories of war, and Karl Marx is teaching Labor all over the world the glories of the Static State. The need to rid ourselves of philosophy is urgent, since in the "inevitable war" between Capital and Labor the men of action are appearing on the scene. Mr. Winston Churchill and Mr. Smillie are angrily facing one another in the conviction that ordeal by battle is the only solution available. They have learned their dangerous philosophic lesson, and are rallying their forces with the joy that men feel before, but never after, an armed conflict.

Let us hope that Bentham was a temporary aberra-

tion, and that we shall regain our healthy hatred of philosophy. It is not in the English character to be caught by words such as Utilitarianism, Positivism, or Efficiency. A Teutonic affection for such abstractions is contrary to the glorious tradition of opportunism, which is our Athenian inheritance. Of late years we have been obsessed with Prussia. Mr. Lloyd George has stolen from its Teutonic cradle the monstrous abortion of the Insurance Act. Lord Rosebery has been charmed with the subtle poison of efficiency. Lord Haldane, in his book *Before the War*, cannot restrain his admiration of Germany's ability to "organize on the basis of widely diffused exact knowledge." It is quite possible that such dangerous admirations may place a nation that has but narrowly escaped State militarism under the equally disastrous and servile yoke of State Socialism.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIALISM AND LABOR

THE fundamental theories on which Socialism is built have now been traced and examined. It has been shown how the German philosophers have extracted from the Conservative past the idea of the organized and Static State, how they have given authority to it by the inculcation of the emotion of State idolatry, and how they propose to use the system when constructed for the purposes of control and the gratification of the instinct for power. It need hardly be mentioned that this particular phase of German *Kultur* was to be inaugurated by war and revolution, since such Conservative ideas spring naturally into the Prussian mind. There has been, however, during the last few years, a considerable slump in what may be called blood-politics. It has been demonstrated that war produces so vast a havoc among economic values that it is as much as mankind can do to survive its operation. Not only is it impossible to make war the foundation of a new economic era, but it requires the whole consolidated energy of mankind to gather together enough from the wreck

to make possible the continuance of mere existence. As for revolution, the experiments of the band of Jews that left Germany to set up Socialism in Russia have hardly popularized the method. A tyranny of intellectual desperadoes murdering the educated in order to preserve a minority in power, and using force to prevent the operation of Democracy, will very quickly destroy the patriotic instinct. All those who can will fly abroad, as they did during the Terror in France. And those who can't will compound a felony and join for ulterior purposes in the game of tyranny.

Peaceful penetration has therefore been substituted among the Western nations for blood-politics as a method of realizing the socialistic State. The use of parliamentary expedients, the capture of the electorate by oratory and propaganda, are to lead forward to the slow socialization of individual industries and the gradual undermining of the Capitalist position. The method of peaceful penetration, however, has several grave disadvantages. Almost any well-developed coal-heaver can engage in blood-politics. But peaceful penetration requires considerable intellectual equipment, more especially since it is directed against the most highly educated classes. It also requires, alas, the assistance of money, the creation of party funds and party discipline. Instead of money being seized, it has sadly to be spent. Instead of intellect being murdered, it has to be put in harness and made to pull the coach. Peaceful

penetration, therefore, made it necessary to forget about the class-war and to open wide the doors of Socialism to lawyers, men of letters, men of business, muddle-headed peers, and other black-coated gentry who will inevitably form a "right" wing to the Socialist movement, soften its original outline, and impede its fundamental purpose. The second disadvantage of peaceful penetration is the slowness with which it moves. In the physical conflict of blood-politics it is the big battalions of Labor that would give it a quick and useless victory. But in the intellectual conflict of peaceful penetration, where people have to be convinced by other arguments than a blow on the head, the Capitalist minority will put up a prolonged and powerful opposition fight. It will take Mr. Smillie four or five years to nationalize the mines against the skillful political antagonism of old parliamentary hands like Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Asquith. But the politicians are only the front-line trench of Capital. What is happening behind the lines during the prolonged trench-battle? Capital is getting away the stores, in case it is forced to retreat. The big landowners are disappearing in England and reappearing in Canada, South Africa, Newfoundland, and the Malay States. It is a curious, but none the less true, fact that there are very few countries left where foreign labor is welcomed, but foreign capital is always received with open arms. Capital, scenting the danger from afar, will use the years of peaceful

penetration to spread itself out, dividing itself and hiding itself all over the world. And when the final victory of peaceful penetration is accomplished the accumulated wealth of the country will have gone. No doubt the land, the machinery, the railways, and other immovable stock will remain, from the bedrock of which the Socialist State will have to rebuild the edifice of industry. Everything therefore depends upon whether the Socialist State can command the brains and energy of the community for such a task, or whether the capitalist himself will follow his capital to lands of freedom and pleasure.

Here we reach the third disadvantage of peaceful penetration. The instinct of Lenin in the direction of world-revolution was the correct and logical outcome of blood-politics; he knew that his tyranny would fail if people could escape from it, and that it must be universally applied. But peaceful penetration is a method which works spasmodically; it succeeds here, and fails there; it goes fast in one country, and slow in another. England, for instance, is far ahead of the United States in all movements towards socialization. But if we imagine the Socialist State completely established in England, and Capitalism still permitted in Canada or the United States, it is obvious that the clever, the ambitious, and the energetic will flock to the country that offers opportunity for such qualities, and rewards that appeal to such temperaments. If Lord Lever-

hulme in his youth had been offered a possible £5000 a year in England as a salary and unlimited possibilities in Canada, it is certain that he would have emigrated. But in addition to the question of individual capacity there would be the usual trade competition between Socialist England and Capitalist Canada, in which the quick and energetic business man, willing to make decisions instantly on his own responsibility and at his own risk, would be pitted against the slow and cumbrous movements of a Government Department, wherein no one would have anything to gain by taking risks, but would have something to lose by accepting responsibility, wherein papers would circulate slowly round and the opinions of innumerable branches would be collected, collated, and minuted upon, wherein decisions would depend upon public policy and public expenditure, and would have to be justified before the electorate. It was found in Russia that a body of men who met and argued before they went over the top could not stand against the Prussian soldier.

Competition in trade is a rivalry that requires instant action against the competitor. For one moment there is a chance of getting an oil well, or a rubber plantation, or a zinc mine, and the next moment that chance has gone. Only certain adventurous and active types of mind can take such chances—the type of mind that leaps at the new invention, and that never hesitates to scrap the useless and the obsolete. We know how rarely

such minds appear in a bureaucracy, and Lord Fisher knows what happens when they do. But it is not only capacity of these men that would be drawn away from Socialist England to Capitalist Canada; it is their income too. During the years of peaceful penetration their capital would be slowly spirited away. As long as they remained themselves, however, their income would be spent in England. But, with their personal departure, the income, from which is paid the interest on the national debt, from which is paid the education of the people, the hospitals of the sick, and practically the entire upkeep of the country, would also disappear. No doubt in time, if socialized industry reached the level of the letter post instead of the level of the telephone service, a moderate accumulation of wealth might restore our civilization to something approaching its present very unsatisfactory level. But the need for both the accumulated wealth of the Capitalist and for his brains will certainly prompt the Socialist State to refuse to let him go. For it is obvious that either Socialism has to adopt the blood-politics of universal revolution, or it has to arrange its peaceful penetration to keep pace step by step with all the other countries, so that they all arrive at the Socialist State together. If Socialism does not do either of those things, but goes its own national path, then, whether that path be bloody or peaceful, vast emigration of money and brains is certain to result, an emigration of immense

value to those parts of the world that are cunning enough to retain the Capitalist system.

The temptation to use force, to deny the right of emigration will be very strong; yet to deny that right is to deprive men of an essential liberty. We now can see how the net of State control closes round the individual. The two initial problems which will face the Socialist State will be the necessity of forcing people to remain in the country, and, as we have seen, of forcing them to work without any incentive to do so. To use force for such purposes is a denial of liberty. There is a vast difference between State control and State interference, such as we have advocated in the last chapter. The State interferes between Capital and Labor, and fixes the minimum wage in the interests of fair play. It is an arbitrator, and not a master. Free Capital and free Labor have the complete liberty to make their own arrangements; the State only interferes when they disagree, or when one or the other becomes too powerful or too selfish. Such action, like the action of a League of Nations, is a safeguard and not a despotism. State control is on the contrary a despotism, dictating to us perpetually every detail of our existence. Every individual would be dependent on the State for everything, since nothing would be produced except what the State considered fit and proper. It is obvious that freedom of demand is one of the pillars of liberty; to be told what we are to have by superior authority is the

badge of slavery. Freedom of demand, like marriage, old age, and other inefficient, unphilosophic liberties, is no doubt a wasteful process. It produces diamond necklaces instead of flannel shirts, and other painful phenomena. On the other hand it is a natural right, and it is tyranny not to allow men the choice of their food, clothing, housing, and amusements. We are told, and truly, that poverty gives the workman very little freedom of demand now. But although the freedom of the workman is limited severely by his income, it is not destroyed. The artisan can choose the wallpaper in his house; he can buy what tobacco he wants. But because a thing is bad now, it is no reason for making it perpetual and universal; on the contrary, it is only one more argument for the necessary increase of wealth. The workman knows, or ought to know, that his present limited freedom comes from insufficiency of wealth, and that when the wealth of the world increases he will have a greater freedom of demand. This he knows, or should know, by experience, since he has to-day a far greater freedom of demand than he had in the past, or than a Chinese workman has now. If he is a victim, it is of vast economic forces against which, since the dawn of history, mankind has been successfully struggling. Under Socialism, on the other hand, he would be the victim of a visible bureaucracy, which would greatly increase his sense of tyranny. It is difficult to say whether any of the natural rights would survive under

the Socialist system. Socialists are very reticent on the subject of marriage and children, so that it is difficult to assert how far they would be controlled. The tendency to indulge in philosophic ideas about eugenics and education would no doubt be very strong in the bureaucracy. It would at any rate be absolutely necessary for the State to decide on the profession of every child, and to forbid any change of profession without the consent of the State. Here at once the business of filling up forms that would be a constant occupation in the servile State would begin. What the child would like to be, what its parents would like it to be, what its teacher thinks it is fit to be, would be recorded, and then the State would tell it what it must be. Naturally every child would desire a congenial job and the parent would make every effort to obtain for it such a job. But the State, always taking for granted that there was no taint of corruption, of influence, or of nepotism, and that the verb "to wangle" disappeared from the language, would fit the child in where it was needed, carefully judging, of course, that perfectly simple thing to ascertain in the young, whether the child was suited to make bottles, or to write the leading articles in the State newspaper. If the decision fell upon the bottles he would remain a bottlemaker unless he could obtain the permission of the State to make shirts instead, which permission, always taking it for granted again that there was no "wangling," would depend not only on the

secret bureaucratic report of his work as a bottlemaker, but also on whether the State wanted bottles or shirts made at the moment. Here, again, the vast intangible unfairness of the industrial system would be replaced by the concrete grievance of a visible bureaucracy.

Officials having fixed what a man shall do, other officials will decide what he shall be paid for his work. On what will that decision be based? If it is a minimum wage based on the cost of living, there will be no change from present methods. The whole question is whether profit is to be eliminated, or whether it is not. If it is, then, taking for granted that the Government Department runs the industry as economically as Capital does now, and that salaried officials are not increased, the State will have a sum to divide up, and will be faced with the difficulty of dividing it fairly among the different grades of workmen. But it is almost impossible to eliminate profit for many reasons:

1. Profit will be the only means of providing the State with the essential capital for new industries, and for replacing the worn-out material of the old ones. Lack of fresh capital would leave industry completely static.
2. Profit will be the only means of replacing the taxation of a non-existent rich, the only means of running the country, paying for public works, for doctors, hospitals, education, re-

ligion, and every form of non-productive but essential service.

3. Profit will be the only means of balancing the economic deficit of the industries that do not pay for the moment, but may be made to pay later, or that never will pay, but are nevertheless essential to civilization.
4. It would be too grossly unfair to divide up the profits of an industry that pays well, if, although there was nothing to divide up in an industry that did not pay, a man was none the less forced to work in it.

But if, owing to these considerations, the element of profit is not eliminated, what is there left with which to supplement wages? There is, of course, the income which is now received by the rich, less what is put back as capital into land, business, and industry; less what is now paid in taxation; less what is now given in charity, for hospitals, for the encouragement of music and art, and for the support of innumerable and mainly unpopular causes; less what is eliminated by the disappearance of voluntary and unpaid work; less the amount that has to be paid in salaries for industrial, commercial, political, literary, and other non-productive brain work; less the income on the accumulated capital that the rich succeed in getting out of the country before the crash comes. The sum that remains can be divided up in

wages among the vast masses of the population, and it will never increase unless it be found that, by a miracle and contrary to all experience, men work harder without than with a financial incentive, or that an industry run by the State is more efficient and more profitable than an industry run by private capital.

Having received his wages the workman will proceed to spend them. As the State is in supreme control of production, it will, of course, produce only what in its wisdom it will consider we ought to have. The State architects will build a standard pattern of State houses, and we shall only be able to put in those houses the standard pattern of State furniture. If the furniture breaks, the State mender will mend it for us. Arrayed in the standard pattern of State clothes, our washing done by the State laundry, we shall sit down to our meal of State food, followed by a smoke of State tobacco. If the State beef is tough, or the State egg is bad, the State butcher and the State dairyman, whom we cannot leave or reprimand, will airily refer us to the Food Department, and a letter to the latter might, after several months, receive the answer that the matter was receiving attention. Having glanced at the State newspaper in order to see what the State thinks of itself, we can either read the State book, or go to the State theater, in order to find out what the State thinks is instructive or amusing.

It is clear that the free element of choice has dis-

appeared. We are at the mercy of a machine that controls us in every moment of our existence, a machine whose course can only be altered by the rare pressure of an occasional vote. Taste, individuality, temperament, all the attributes of the fuller life are difficult enough to indulge now in the absence of sufficient wealth. But we are moving in the direction of a fuller life. In the richest countries, such as the United States, a very high standard has been reached. In the Socialist State there is no tendency whatever towards the liberty of a fuller life. On the contrary, the whole system is organized and standardized on the basis of permanent control. Everything is leveled down and established on a Tottenham Court Road standard, so that life is not only relieved of danger, but is also deprived of variety. A conscript soldier in barracks may appear to be better off than a wage-earner in a factory. The paternal State feeds him, and clothes him, and houses him, gives him a little money for luxuries, looks after his health, and is not unkind to him. He is not afraid of poverty; he has no social or economic anxieties. Yet the instincts of men have told them that the life of the conscript soldier is not the summit of civilization that we are seeking, since it lacks, not liberty, since the wage-earner has no more, if as much, but a tendency towards increasing liberty. If you gave the conscript a more comfortable barrack, better food and clothes, and more money, it would make no difference to his real condition, since he

is still bound to the State, and that bondage is the permanent essence of his existence. The slave may be contented, he may have a very long and almost invisible chain, but he remains a slave.

The wage-earner in a factory, however desperate his social and economic position, knows, or should know, that his life has a tendency towards increasing liberty. It is useless for a thousand dull and heavy writers to manipulate their vast statistics and hurl them at our heads in the effort to prove that the Socialist system is economically sound. It may be sound enough, or it may not. Quantities of wild barbarisms and fierce tyrannies have proved their economic success in the history of the world. There is hardly a Conservative system that has ever existed that has not paid its way. The woman in a Turkish harem and the slave on a Virginian plantation were safe enough from poverty and starvation. Whence comes the support that Socialism receives? No doubt partly from the workingman who in his heart desires, and rightly desires, to be richer than he is. He does not understand either philosophy or economics; but he has a secret and firm belief that there is an inexhaustible fund of wealth which a few people are unfairly keeping from him, and which he has only got to stretch out his hand to take. The intellectuals know that this is not true; they know the fund is all too small, and that work remains the prime necessity of existence. But, like Rousseau in the years before the

Terror, they hear the bitter cry of suffering humanity so loudly in their ears that their sympathies have taught them to believe that liberty is worth bartering for economic security. To them liberty that does not entail economic security is not liberty at all, in which they are right. But they do not see that our problem is to make liberty entail economic security, not to adopt a system that merely provides economic security by the destruction of liberty. The supreme power of the State is a philosophic evasion of a political problem. Liberalism cannot evade that problem, since the future of civilization is concerned in its solution. The State stands to a citizen as the parent stands to a child. When the child is grown the parent cannot deny it the liberty to live its own life. The child would be much safer and happier under parental control. It would have an ordered and easy existence. It would avoid suffering, hardship, and difficulty. Sometimes, when he observes the troubles of his child, the parent is convinced that he ought still to be in control. But he is wrong, because the liberty of his child is in question. He may assist, but he may not control.

This is the position of Liberalism. It is bound to take the side of liberty against control, but it can only do so effectively if it is prepared to assist Labor to obtain economic security. It must take over the work that has been so wastefully and inadequately performed by the Trades Unions. It must guard the standard of

living and continually raise it as the wealth of the community increases. But it must always lay stress on the fact that wealth is a blessing and not an evil, and that its terrible weight upon the back of Labor is only a temporary phenomenon, that will cease when Capital has learned from Lord Leverhulme and others that it is not wise or profitable to be selfish.

Democracy, when it inherited power, inherited a Conservative instinct, an instinct unfortunately far more powerful over human minds than a tendency towards liberty. Democracy does not differ from any other form of Government in respect of the fact that within it will arise the two divergent points of view that have been labeled Liberal and Conservative. Those who have hope for the future of humanity, and those who despair of it, remain in conflict, however far we widen the franchise. The view that Hobbes held on the subject of monarchy, that mankind is naturally selfish, and that he must be governed by an orderly system of control, is exactly the view that Mr. Sidney Webb holds on the subject of Democracy. The basis of power is altered, but the use of power is the same. Such a view is the permanent Conservative element in political society. The mere detail of the hands in which the power lies is of relatively small importance. Hobbes thought it best that power should remain in the hands of monarchy, and regretted its transfer to the House of Commons. The Duke of Wellington thought it best

that power should remain in the hands of aristocratic birth, and regretted its transfer to plutocratic wealth. Mr. Balfour thinks it best that power should remain in the hands of plutocratic wealth, and regrets its transfer to bureaucratic brains. The cause of all this regret and the cause of Mr. Sidney Webb's delight is that the monarch, the aristocrat, the plutocrat, and the bureaucrat all share in the belief that power of control is the only method of governing men, and they only differ in the fact that each thinks he could wield that power more justly and more efficiently than the other. But the ultimate value of Democracy as a form of Government is vitiated by its adoption of the ancient Conservative instinct for power, and can only be realized if it is proved to possess a more consistent Liberal tendency towards liberty than any previous form of Government.

Democracy, led by Liberalism, has dealt successfully with the claim of aristocratic birth to control liberty. It is engaged in dealing with the claim of plutocratic wealth to control liberty. It is of vital importance that in its hard conflict with that claim it should not, from mere impatience and weariness of the delay of victory, surrender to the new claim of bureaucratic brains to control liberty. But whatever metamorphosis this persistent claim to control may assume, it is invariably accompanied by a vague personification and glorification of the State. When we consider the vast powers that will be wielded over the individual by the

Socialist edition of this Conservative idea, powers more personal, more inquisitive, and less easy to evade than any previous despotism, we may well pause to ask ourselves, not that conundrum so dear to philosophy, "What is the State?" but the far more important and more easily overlooked question, "Who is the State?"

CHAPTER IX

SOCIALISM AND BUREAUCRACY

In the days of Monarchy the inquiry as to who is the State was abruptly solved by the well-known and arrogant answer of Louis XIV After 1688 in England, however, when the struggle between Parliament and the King was concluded, the State fell into the hands of a close aristocratic corporation of great families, a corporation so jealous of its right to rule that it would not allow even the intellectual capacity of Burke to obtain its proper recognition. The French Revolution and the Reform Bill of 1832 opened the political gateway to talent as well as to wealth. The giving of places disappeared, and the Civil Service was recruited by competitive examination. The careers of Disraeli, of Chamberlain, and of Mr. Lloyd George are sufficient proof that, given sufficient capacity, there is no height to which any man may not rise in the service of the State. It is curious, therefore, to find the phrase "governing classes" as firmly established in the language as ever it was in the eighteenth century. It is clear that as long as Government exists at all a govern-

ing class is inevitable. You may recruit them how you will, grade them as you like, pay them high or low, they will nevertheless form a class with inherited instincts and traditions. From every conceivable variety of home boys go to Eton, yet Eton never fails to stamp them with its seal of tradition. Professions do not differ in this respect from schools. The soldier and the sailor and the lawyer acquire personality from their employment. It is not surprising, therefore, that the atmosphere of a Government Department catches hold of a man in his youth and molds him into a type. Unconsciously he adopts a traditional point of view, acquires an *esprit de corps*, and as the years go by embodies in himself all the attributes and characteristics of the bureaucrat.

During the war even the temporary denizens of Whitehall found themselves putting on the clothes of bureaucracy and picking up its habits of thought and action. The love of writing, the accumulation and distribution of documents, the filing and indexing and annotating, the belief in the printed form are the first symptoms of the bureaucratic disease. At a later stage there comes an inability to make decisions, an intense desire to pass on and upwards the awkward problem and the dangerous responsibility, and a defensive huddling together against every breath of criticism or threatening of attack that comes from outside.

This bureaucratic type has done loyal and splendid

service in the past; it is admirably fitted for the slow and cautious business of uncompetitive statecraft; and it has always been ready to respond to the institutions of Democracy and to sink itself in the will of the Cabinet of the day. It is only lately, when its place in the political scheme has altered, and when powers have been thrust upon it that it was never intended to possess, that it has incurred suspicion and unpopularity. There is indeed a direct antithesis between the bureaucratic and the business type, and it is an illusion to believe that they are interchangeable. During King Edward's reign many of the great business firms tempted distinguished civil servants into the City by the offer of large salaries, but the experiment was almost invariably unsuccessful. Of late years the converse has been tried, and the failure of the business man as a bureaucrat has been painful and notorious. The business man cannot tolerate the restraints of a Government Department, and he has not been trained to control the expenditure of public money. The bureaucrat cannot make the swift decisions that are vital in the business world, and he has not been trained to work in competition. The one craft is responsibility without risk; the other is risk without responsibility. Bureaucrats have been found fairly successful and efficient if they have been asked to administer a socialized business that is not competitive, but even then their success is never comparable to a business that is competitive and is not socialized. The

fact remains that the vast increase in the size of the bureaucracy and the manifold ramifications of its duties has not changed the type of man that it produces. It is assumed by the advocates of the Socialist State that, if they swept out what they choose to call "the governing classes," they could be replaced by a new body of men who would be perfectly fit and efficient, not only to control the rest of the population, but also to manipulate the entire industrial and economic business of the country. It is an assumption that needs examination.

The essential difference between a democratic Civil Service and a Socialistic bureaucracy is the vast increase of real power that the latter will possess. In the past the Civil Service has been sufficiently small to be easily controlled by the Cabinet. It has therefore been the Cabinet that held the real power in the State, a power which has been becoming gradually too great, and which it should be the business of Liberalism to curtail, but which is open and visible to the eye of a revengeful electorate. No Cabinet could possibly control the activities of the enormous bureaucracy that the institution of Socialism would entail. It is difficult enough to extract redress of grievance from a Cabinet that in a few years will die, it will be impossible from a bureaucracy that is immortal. Experts cannot be continually changed, and security of tenure, combined with the impossibility of proper supervision, will make the bureau-

crat contemptuous of complaint. Even a Cabinet of these days, dealing with a large question like the fate of Constantinople, can make itself independent of public opinion by pretending that a matter is under consideration until it is irrevocably accomplished, and then calling it a *chose jugée*. Only an organized and expensive public agitation can make the opinion of the people effective even now against the power of the Cabinet. There would be little hope, therefore, of the rights of any man being successfully vindicated in conflict with a bureaucracy that controlled the State Press and the entire machine of Government.

It is hardly necessary, perhaps, to prove the enormous size of the bureaucracy that would be necessary.

1. They would not only have to administer the Churches, but also decide on the graded salaries of every sect.

2. They would not only have to administer elementary, secondary, technical, and university education, but also decide on the work each child was to do in the world.

3. They would not only have to administer the hospitals, but also decide on the graded salaries of the doctors.

4. They would not only have to administer the law-courts, but also decide on the graded salaries of barristers, solicitors, and judges.

5. They would not only have to administer the press,

the theater, art, and literature, but also decide on the graded salaries of journalists, actors, artists, and men of letters.

6. They would have to obtain funds from which the salaries of the above unproductive industries could be drawn.

7. They would have to organize, administer, and develop not only the mines, the railways, and the land, but shipping, insurance, cotton, wool, and every form of industry, large or small, throughout the country.

8. They would have to organize, administer, and develop every branch of foreign trade, in addition to performing all the complicated financial operations now carried out by the banks and the Stock Exchange.

9. They would have to organize and administer the vast retail business of the country.

10. They will have to decide what is to be performed and produced by industry, and lay down what is a necessity and what a luxury in a modern community. Is a non-productive hairdresser a necessity for instance? And, if so, what about a non-productive manicurist? Could not hairpins be dispensed with if an order in council made it obligatory for women to have short hair? Are bedroom slippers a necessity, or a luxury? Shall men shave at a shop, or at home? Shall the State continue to encourage the use of fish-knives? How can the number of people to be earmarked for employment in the State laundry be ascertained unless it is laid down

how many times a week the community is to change its underclothes? Innumerable conundrums of a similar character will come up daily for solution by the organized State.

11. They will have to decide the number, quality, and description of every article to be produced. The wants of the community will have to be ascertained in advance and registered by officials. A huge amount of clerical work would be necessary in addition to decide if those wants were justified. The number of State baby bottles would depend first on the anticipated number of babies, and next on the estimated proportion of those babies who would be fed on the bottle. The number of suits of State clothes would depend on a nice calculation of allowance according to wear and tear, in which the problem would be stated in such terms as, if a clerk has two a year, how many should a bricklayer have. What sort of a State hat would every woman wear? The quality of the standard State article would have to be decided in addition to the quantity, and a Committee of State taste would have you decide on the appearance of everything from a house to a plate.

As the whole of the above work would be additional to the present activities of the Civil Service, it is clear that so overwhelming an amount of statistical and clerical labor would require a huge amount of officials. It is known how largely even so comparatively simple an operation as the taxation of land values, or the ad-

ministration of war pensions, increased the number of the bureaucracy. The Socialist State would definitely divide the community into those who were Government officials and those who were not. The class distinction thus created would be a most profound division, a division more irksome than that between rich and poor, since the line is more clearly drawn, and is more obviously artificial. It is obvious that the powers of this immense bureaucracy would be so great that everything would depend on its use of those powers. If it was benevolent and virtuous it would, like autocracy, appear an excellent form of Government. But what guarantee have we that it will be either? Presumably it will fix its own salaries, a power a little tempting to the cupidity of human nature. If these salaries are fixed high it will be able to save money, but not, of course, to leave it by will to its children. The question of gifts will therefore require a constant espionage of some sort. Let us suppose that out of my salary as Controller of State cows I save £500, and buy with it the "Kilmarnock" edition of Burns's poems. It will be the business of the State to see that it is not slipped into my son's trunk when he goes on a holiday to America, since he could on arrival there sell it and lay the foundation of accumulated capital. Gifts of all sorts and buried treasures are difficult to trace. If, on the other hand, these salaries are fixed low there will be an immense temptation to be corrupt in the bureaucratic world.

In France and the United States it has been proved that badly paid bureaucrats endowed with large powers are invariably open to bribery and corruption. A body of men who have no private interest in faithful administration, who cannot learn from experience that honesty is the best policy, and who are so expert that they cannot be removed without an entire dislocation of the system, will find it difficult to be either benevolent or virtuous. It is certain that over so large a number of individuals the usual average of good and bad will be maintained. A certain proportion will make blunders; a certain proportion will commit crimes. Cruelty, stupidity, venality, corruption, "wangling," and nepotism must unfortunately be expected to appear. If it were not so, if men become so perfect that such faults can be counted out of our political calculations, then obviously the need for Government of any sort will have also disappeared. When the governors are perfect, the governed will be perfect also. The governors of mankind have never been perfect, and the whole political effort to curtail the power of the executive has been based on the certainty of such imperfection. The vices that we have mentioned above, and the appearance of which can be counted upon, are only dangerous when they are found in combination with great power. It was this discovery which was fatal to monarchical despotism, and provided the impetus of Liberal Democracy. Conservative Socialism will make these

vices dangerous again, since the governing bureaucratic class will have practically unlimited power over human liberty of action.

If it be granted, then, that the Socialist State is to be governed by a vast bureaucratic class endowed with immense power, it still remains to inquire of whom that class will consist. The answer to that question theoretically is that those who are talented and energetic will form the bureaucracy. We have in this country at the present time quantities of people who are both talented and energetic, a considerable proportion of whom go to form the governing classes, and the remainder of whom, exclusive of those who are kept down by poverty and lack of opportunity, constitute the leaders of the commercial and industrial community. We are bound to ask ourselves what effect the erection of the Socialist State will have upon these people. Already under the growing burden of taxation the land of England is falling into the hands of countless smallholders, and the previous owners are buying up vast tracts of land in new countries that are less affected by debt and labor trouble. But it is not only in land that this process is visible. While, on the one hand, the number of holders of government securities has enormously increased, the real rich are investing their money abroad. Those who judge the world by statistics will tell you there is no evidence of this, as indeed there is not. But we all know it is being done, because we all

know people who are doing it. The investment is made by a foreign bank, and the interest, collected by a foreign bank, is reinvested abroad by that bank. For these operations are performed by people so rich that they can afford to do without a great deal of the interest on their capital, and to let it accumulate at compound interest. In addition to this we all of us have among our acquaintance a number of people who are becoming citizens of South Africa, Jersey, Sark, or the Isle of Man, where the taxation is low, and from whence they can spend as many months of the year as they wish as a 'visitor" in England. If the robbery of modern taxation can have this effect, how much more so will the robbery of the Socialist State. We are often told that people are too patriotic to emigrate; yet history is strewn with examples of colonies formed by those who have fled from political oppression. There comes a moment when the control of the State becomes so intolerable a yoke upon the liberties of men that, like the Pilgrim Fathers, they will run any risk rather than endure its continuance. Also it is nearly always the best blood and the best type that will have recourse to such a solution. Even now the most energetic of the population are apt to emigrate, not be it observed because they are faced with starvation and cannot earn a living, but as a rule because they are tempted by the possibilities of earning more than a mere living, in fact of becoming rich. If taxation and lack of opportunity

can have these results under the present system, it is certain that the complete inability to either remain or become rich in the Socialist State will have similar results on a far larger scale among the talented and the energetic.

It will probably be replied that while the above is perfectly correct, yet, though many go, many will remain. It is true that a large proportion of the talented and the energetic will remain at home, and that from that residue the bureaucracy will be formed. But we must not forget that during this present era of "peaceful penetration" that bureaucracy is being formed already, and the new over-lord is silently and almost unconsciously usurping the power to direct humanity.

> See-saw, Margery Daw,
> Jack shall have a new master;
> He shall have but a penny a day,
> Because he can't work any faster.

He built the Pyramids did Jack, and then the Parthenon, and then the Coliseum, and then St. Peter's, and then Versailles. Only yesterday he built the Metropolitan Tower in New York, forty stories of offices where "big business" is done. What will he build to-morrow? Some huge Government Department to house his new master, the Bureaucracy. Did I say "new master"? It is only the old master under a new name. English history is full of the chameleon

qualities of the rich. How quickly the feudal Baron is metamorphosed into the landed aristocrat, and the landed aristocrat into the mine owner and the railway director. We find often the same family names cast for these varied parts across the centuries. And these people will control the new bureaucracy. They know which way the wind is blowing, and they are preparing for the change of direction. At present we are in what may be called the "flattery" stage—a stage so well remembered at the beginning of the industrial era. They could not degrade themselves by being bureaucrats, but they are obliged to know bureaucrats, to ask them to dinner, and to obtain privileges in exchange for recognition. A little later in the period of "peaceful penetration," as they realize more fully where the seat of power and privilege lies, they will make their sons bureaucrats, and the bureaucracy will be their bureaucracy. Many of them welcome the return of power and privilege to a definite governing class to which they will take good care to belong. Even now, if you have a friend who knows a bureaucrat, or, better, if you have a friend who is a bureaucrat, or, best of all, if you are a bureaucrat yourself, the sails of privilege will waft you as gently through the world as if you lived in the reign of good Queen Anne, and your name was Vere de Vere, twentieth Earl of Oxford. Under the Socialist State the necessity of being a bureaucrat will be greater still. Such wealth as there is, and all privilege, will go to him.

The State motor, the reserved carriage in the State train, the comfortable room in the State Department, the front seats in the State theater, obsequious attention at the State hotel will come naturally to the governing bureaucratic class. The tyranny of power and privilege will not differ from any other, and it will be run by the same people. It will be a cold, unapproachable, impersonal, intangible tyranny. It will evade the ritual of Democracy by hiding its permanent power behind its tool, the elected but professional politician. It will control elections through a State-owned press, and the redress which the individual will obtain for the injustice it commits will be such as a soldier knows whose command paymaster has juggled with his pay, or as a city clerk knows whose income tax has been deducted at the full rate at the source. To-day the bureaucratic tyranny is in its infancy, but it is growing fast and silently. Those who have their ears to the ground, the young men behind the Cabinet, the Controllers, and all the hydra-headed branches of the infant bureaucracy, intend to forestall Mr. Sidney Webb and Mr. Smillie, and to use the doctrines of Karl Marx as the foundation of their own supremacy.

Mr. Webb will hold up his hands in pious horror at such a picture of the Socialist millennium. The philosopher will be called in to produce a theory by which it will not be possible for such things to happen. But how can they be prevented? Mr. Webb cannot get on with-

out these people. They are the experts; they have the knowledge and the experience, both inherited and acquired. It is impossible to clear out the Treasury tomorrow morning and fill it with agricultural laborers. In any form of election by examination their advantages of education will enable them to defeat the coal-miner who puts up against them. From the very day on which the Socialist State is inaugurated the need for them will be great and obvious. Without their assistance the experiment will fail as egregiously as the General Staff failed in the late war as long as the authorities, in the first joys of Conscription, continued to use Senior Wranglers to look after horses. It is obvious that for the successful formation of the vast Socialist bureaucracy it is essential to use the talented and the energetic. Even the remote prospect of a very moderate Labor Government has forced Mr. Webb to open the doors of the party to what are called brain-workers. There appears to be an idea lurking in the philosophic mind of Socialism that there is some obscure distinction between a brain-worker and those who are at present directing and governing the Capitalist world. But let us assume that by a touch of the Fabian wand a completely new body of talented and energetic men, as able as those they are to replace, can by some philosophic scheme be discovered, selected, and enthroned in the seats of the mighty. It is, of course, quite possible, and even probable, that, given time and educational

facilities, the untapped resources of the working class would produce a quantity of able brain-workers. This process would be the formation of a new aristocracy of brains in place of a discarded aristocracy that had contaminated the pure stream of intellect with the refuse of birth and wealth. In all communities a natural aristocracy is certain to appear, since men differ in capacity and character from each other, and this appearance would in the Socialist State be hastened and encouraged by the clear line drawn between the governors and the governed. But this natural aristocracy once created and endowed with vast bureaucratic powers, what reason have we for supposing that it would differ from any other aristocracy? Mr. Webb himself might find it just as easy to adopt the Balfourian manner, as Mr. Disraeli found it to wear the coronet of an earl. Our experience of Labor members is that they quickly acquire the outlook and habits of the governing classes, in spite of the fact that up to the present they have not been subjected by the possession of real power to those influences which form the character of an aristocracy. It is certain that when the Socialist bureaucracy is established in power that it will form a natural aristocracy of intellect very similar to those of birth and wealth, and that it will be assailed by the old question of the proletariat:

> When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?

The black-coated bureaucracy, select it how and from what social strata we please, will neither delve nor spin, and it will naturally excite the envy and dislike of those who do. Social status, prestige, and privilege are almost as dear to human beings as wealth itself, and all those, including the use of the higher rates of salary, will be the exclusive possession of the bureaucracy.

There is, of course, a profound fallacy that underlies the Socialist position. They are under the illusion that human beings, who dislike being ordered about by people who are better born or richer than themselves, are going to relish being ordered about by people who are cleverer than they are. It is the illusion of the schoolmaster, which generations of schoolboys have failed to dispel. To put it in another way, Socialists suppose that men who resented being bossed by Lord Salisbury in the eighteenth century and by Lord Rothschild in the nineteenth, are going to welcome with delight the idea of being bossed by Sir Leo Chiozza Money in the twentieth century. The latest of the despots will, no doubt, make the usual Conservative claim that the tyranny of statistics is more upright and more benevolent than its predecessors. That remains to be proved. The only thing that is certain is that its power is far greater, more inquisitive, and more universal. But once again we must point out to these Conservatives that their benevolence is no justification of their tyranny. In the United States, in Ireland, and in

India the Conservative mind has always complacently believed that it was only called upon to prove the justice or the utility of its control. They have never realized that it is control itself which is irksome to human ideas of liberty. Once more the conflict between Liberal and Conservative is obvious. Liberals do not deny that there is now a tyranny of Capital, but they maintain that it is a tyranny that will rapidly decrease before the onslaught of Liberalism. Also the tyranny of Capital is loose and chaotic, so that it is difficult to tell whether we are in its grip, or whether we are the victims of the vast and age-long economic laws of this poverty-stricken planet. At any rate the tyranny of Capital has a tendency towards increasing individual liberty, since there is in existence a power greater than itself, the power of the Liberal State to interfere in its capacity as the guardian of liberty, from whatever quarter that liberty may be threatened. But the tyranny of bureaucracy has no tendency whatever towards increasing individual liberty, since, like Louis XIV, it is the State, and there is no power in existence greater than itself, to protect us from its organized control.

CHAPTER X

THE LIBERAL FUTURE

We have endeavored in the preceding chapters to show that Socialism represents the Conservative influence in modern political society. It is made up of all the ingredients of Conservative thought. It is invented by philosophers on the premise of a clean slate. It maintains that Government is a science and not an art. It is grossly materialistic. It denies all natural rights. It creates a Static State, gives it the sanction of patriotism and idolatry, endows it with unlimited power, authority, and control, and, after dividing society into two definite classes, hands over to one of them, and that a natural aristocracy of brains, the unchallenged and permanent possession of the machine. It refuses to wait for the processes of evolution, and, by the very impetus of its own principles, is obliged to follow the path first of national revolution, and then of international war, in order to impose its doctrines. Above all, it possesses a disastrous tendency to decrease the individual liberty of men.

Against systems based upon such ideas Liberalism

has been contending since the dawn of history, and the need for it to continue the struggle against the Socialist reincarnation of Conservatism is obvious and vital. But Liberalism is not merely concerned with opposition, it is also necessary for it to construct and reform. And in order to discover the direction of its constructive and reformatory activities, we must ask ourselves what it is in Socialism that has drawn towards it so strong a support in a Democracy ignorant of its history and its tendencies.

In spite of the mass of material with which the intellect of man has overlaid the broad outlines of history, making it continually more difficult to see the wood for the trees, the years that divide Mr. Sidney Webb from Moses are very few compared with the ages that were necessary to reach the Mosaic standard of life. We grow impatient with progress by comparing it with our short lives. The attempt of mankind to emancipate itself has the appearance of failure to those who are eager to record achieved results, and we attempt to forestall the processes of time either by consolidating the imperfect present or by constructing a system that will to-morrow produce the millennium. Both these types of mental attitude are Conservative and contrary to the law of evolution. In its own time, and when it is ready for it, mankind will be completely free, and the necessity for government will be gone. In the meantime it is our business to add a stone or two to the build-

ing of the temple, and to see to it that no one, Prussian or otherwise, either obstructs the building or succeeds in persuading us that it is built. At this moment Capital is obstructing the building of the temple of liberty, while Socialism is asserting that it can complete the building at once. The appeal that Socialism makes is not, however, contained in that assertion, since very few believe in its truth. The appeal that Socialism makes is that it alone is genuinely and sincerely determined to oppose the obstruction that Capital makes to human progress. The problem of distribution is economic, and by no means insoluble. But Liberalism has to show that it genuinely desires to solve it, and that it is not tied by a secret treaty to the selfish *status quo* of Capitalism. There is after all some justification for the growing distrust of our democratic institutions. They have the appearance of having had their day and of being unfit to deal with the difficulties that surround the future. Parliament and politicians, and all the inherited paraphernalia of Democracy, have fallen into disrepute just at the moment when the full fruition of the franchise has been obtained by the masses of the community. This fall in the value of the vote has been accelerated by the methods of Mr. Lloyd George, who has shown too clearly how the democratic machine can be misused and manipulated. The mobilization of the Press, the secret employment of party funds, the sale of honors, the subtle distortion of Parliamentary

procedure, have had the effect of destroying both the independence of the constituencies and the usefulness of the franchise. It is not surprising, therefore, that men should turn to the direct action of the Trades Union Congress, or even to the Soviet, as political methods by which there is more chance of their influencing policy and events. The power of the Cabinet as opposed to the power of the House of Commons has rapidly increased during the last generation, and that process has culminated in the almost despotic power of the Prime Minister himself. The Prime Minister is surrounded by a secret Junta of unofficial intellectuals who cannot be removed or assailed. That Junta controls the House of Commons by the power of the Whips, who decide what is to be discussed and what is to be forgotten, who use the closure for their own political convenience, and hold over the private member not only the threat of a general election, but also the promise of support, without which his candidature would have been vetoed. That Junta controls the constituencies by its power to select candidates and by its power to dispose of the vast funds that the sale of honors produces. That Junta attempts to control public opinion by the mobilization of the Press which supports its policy, colors the news of the day to suit the powers that be, and constitutes itself the blatant trumpet of ministerial virtue. Fortunately this mobilization is difficult to complete and retain, since the

Press is still free from Government control, and a powerful section of the Press has broken away from its dependence on the Celtic Cabal. But in the face of this elaborate consolidation of the democratic machine, the individual voter very naturally despairs of being able to influence events. He believes a combination of brains and money has got hold of Democracy, a combination too strong to be broken, and too selfish to be sincere about the difficulties of distribution. He knows that he can vote for either of two candidates that he has chosen. He knows that his Member will support in the House a policy over which neither the member himself nor his constitutents have any control. He knows the time that will be wasted there, the public money that will be squandered, and the impossibility of extracting the truth from the recesses of Government mystification. He knows that what Parliament accomplishes will be under the pressure of influence not his own. It is natural, therefore, that he should lose faith in the institutions of Democracy, and turn aside to other forms of political expression. The fine fervor with which the individual greeted the advent of the House of Commons to power and place has died away in the arid waste of the party system, and it seems incredible that Parliament should ever free itself, much less others, from the clutch of Capitalism. The interests appear so strong and the dependence of the machine upon them so great, that it seems hopeless to expect any diminution of their

power, and the unchangeable desire of men for liberty prompts them to combat Democracy itself and to deny its utility as a progressive force.

Now this view that Democracy is a machine that has been captured by Capital is not permanently true. Democracy may become temporarily subservient to the selfish interests of a powerful class, but such subserviency is not essential to Democracy. It has the power, and only needs the will, to achieve its independence. But Liberalism has to make up its mind that all its rightful opposition to Socialism, all its determination to rid itself of Benthamite *laissez faire*, and to deal with the vital problems of economic distribution, will be useless unless it can convince the individual voter that there is real vitality in the democratic idea. The easier problem of the hold that money and brains have over politics must be solved before any attempt can be made to deal with the larger and more difficult economic problems that call for the temporary interference of the State. Only by a resolute cleansing of the Augean stables of politics will Liberalism persuade the individual voter that it intends to deal justly with Capital and Labor, so that both may be preserved and that both may share the wealth that is produced.

The strength of Capital over the democratic State is an illusion. If it desires to be so, Liberalism is the master of Capitalism, and the present state of affairs, which appears to argue the converse, is a façade of

power in which Liberalism has acquiesced and which Capitalism has naturally desired to pass for truth. In reality it is a shallow deception, and it is important to examine the fallacy upon which that deception is built. We are told that no party, not even Liberalism, can be run without funds. That is, of course, true, since nothing from the League of Nations down to Socialism itself can be independent of ready money. But that does not prove that the present method of raising money and of expending it are also necessary. We are told that men will not subscribe money unless they receive some definite reward or return for doing so. That is no doubt also true, but it does not prove that the present rewards held out to subscribers to party funds are the only ones that can be offered. Capitalism, like every other organism, possesses the instinct of self-preservation. It is aware that the powerful force of Socialism is pledged to its destruction. Between it and that destruction there stands nothing but the alternative form of evolution that Liberalism represents. Whatever, therefore, Capitalism may find distasteful in Liberal policy, it is nevertheless bound to support it financially and otherwise. If, through lack of money, Liberalism fails, it is Capital that will suffer. So strong is the position of Liberalism as the buttress of private property that it can prevent the man that pays the piper from calling the tune. It can boldly declare its determination to see that Capital neither abuses its power nor

obtains a disproportionate share of the wealth produced, because it is obvious that the only alternative to the acceptance by Capital of Liberal policy entails, not a mere guardianship of the ring in the interest of fair play, but a knock-out blow to one of the combatants concerned. It must be pointed out to Capital how completely its continued existence is dependent upon the success of Liberalism, a fact which, when emphasized, will make it clear that Liberalism is the master and not the slave of Capital. The subscriber to the party fund will receive a definite return for his money in the continuance of the system by which that money was made. But party funds obtained for such a purpose and regarded in such a manner need no longer be secret. Men who subscribe for the reform of their own organization in order to avoid its destruction need not be any more ashamed of their names being published than if they had subscribed to a National Theater. Democracy has been brought into disrepute not by the existence of the party fund, but by the secrecy which surrounds it. The suspicions with regard to the sale of honors magnify to a vast extent the degree of corruption that really exists, magnify it so greatly that there is hardly an honor now given that is not tarnished by this atmosphere of secrecy. Yet in America vast sums of money are raised for party purposes without the assistance of an honors' list. The abolition of secrecy would restore not only the purity of the fountain of

honor, but also the credit of the party system. Democracy cannot tolerate the ugly fact that its political ideals are based financially upon the ulterior motives of snobbery. But a man who openly subscribes towards the preservation of a definite political and economic system only displays that legitimate amount of self-interest that a workingman displays who openly subscribes to a Trade Union. In both cases no doubt a man's public opinion is colored by his private interest, but the natural right to wealth and private property can be supported by arguments of which no man need be ashamed, which is more than can be said for the unnatural right to draw a check and be made a Viscount.

When Liberalism has made it possible for the list of those who subscribe to its party funds to see the light of day, it should take the further step of openly disclosing the uses to which those funds have been put. There is no real necessity for treating a party fund on the same lines as the Secret Service. It is just as well known what that fund is used for as it is known on what the money of a parliamentary candidate is spent. There is a certain type of mind that cherishes the "Secret de Polichinelle," in spite of its glaring ineptitude. We all know that candidates have to be found for hopeless seats; we all know the expense of organization and propaganda. The only doubt we have is the extent to which the control of the constituencies by the central

office has been carried. Here, again, our suspicions magnify the degree of despotism that, at any rate in the Liberal Party, really exists, magnify it so greatly that there is hardly a seat whose member is believed to be independent of the machine. The abolition of secrecy would not only restore the position of the private member, but it would rid Democracy of the sensation of being controlled by a machine. Whips and wirepullers, like diplomatists, have, if they are honest and sincere, everything to gain by publicity. The mystery and silence in which their activities are shrouded get them a bad name, since we have no means of distinguishing their correct and legitimate direction of the machine from the base and ignoble uses to which we know it can be turned by others. The temptations to take advantage of such a machine are great, and experience of human nature teaches us that sooner or later secret and unchecked power will be abused. So we have seen a Central Office develop the "Coupon" system, and arrogate to itself the right to demand from its candidates perpetual and unreserved support of a Prime Minister, whatever he may do or become.

The secret subscription gratifies the instinct for power in money; the secret fund gratifies the instinct for power in brains. In discussing Socialism we have shown how Conservative such an instinct is, and Liberalism is too old an organization to escape the encroachment of that instinct. But if Liberalism is to retain its value as a

weapon against Conservative Socialism, it must root out every vestige of that instinct from its own organism, and retain only those tendencies towards liberty that justify its existence and ensure its victory. Men who are intended by nature to run a machine invariably concentrate upon its efficiency, and overlook what is necessary for its enduring vitality. Secrecy and complete control appear to constitute the necessary requisites for the efficiency of a political machine, but, at any rate as far as a Liberal machine is concerned, they are fatal to its enduring vitality. The removal of secrecy and control cannot fail to put new life into Liberalism. The local Liberal Associations are neither dangerous nor infantile. They will neither abuse their freedom nor betray the cause. If they need assistance they will say so without shame, and there is no need to disguise either the nature or the amount of the assistance given. If on the other hand they do not need assistance, Liberalism has everything to gain by the increase of local political independence. Constituencies that have thought out their own problems, have grafted the local aspect on to the broad horizon of Liberal opinion, and have chosen their own independent member to represent that point of view at Westminster, will be more difficult to manage only in the sense that a healthy baby is more troublesome than one that has been drugged by its nurse.

A larger dose of freedom than this is required, however, to excite the enthusiasm of the individual voter

and to revive the self-respect of the private member. The influence of the machine has entered so deeply into political life that no branch of activity is free from its insidious control. Many excuses are made by the shepherd for his increasing control over the sheep. No doubt Parliament is overburdened with work, and the mere necessity of getting things done forces the executive to decide when the private member shall vote and what he shall vote about. But the closure and the Whip are used too often and too relentlessly in the endeavor to accomplish the impossible. It is obviously feasible for Parliament to rid itself of all that is unessential in its intolerable burden of government. Devolution has become the imperative necessity of our complicated society, and it is time that a clear line should be drawn between measures that are of local and those that are of national or imperial importance. If, through the existence of local parliaments, Westminster was able to concentrate its attention upon finance, foreign politics, and large measures of supreme national importance, an infinitely more creditable amount of considered legislation would be produced than is now turned out half-baked under the closure and the Whip. The executive would not be driven by the harassing menace of the clock to announce despotically to its followers that they must "take it," and that if they "leave it" there will be a general election. Under present conditions the executive have not the power to

leave any measure of freedom to the private member. But if the element of hurry is removed, they will have the power, and will only need the will. An adverse vote should never entail the fall of the Government unless it is a vote of censure. On the contrary, it should not be possible for a Government to resign for such a reason; a vote of censure should always precede its resignation. The threat of resignation upon an adverse vote is merely a convenient instrument, lately perfected, for increasing the power of the executive. It should always be possible for the House to say that it approves of the Government, but does not approve of the particular thing that it proposes to do. The executive can always discover whether the intention of the House is to throw it out, or merely to alter its legislation, by arranging a vote of censure. The control of the machine and the executive over the private member would thus be greatly diminished, and far closer touch would be maintained between the Government and the individual voter. It should be the object of Liberalism to increase that democratic liaison to the widest possible extent. The right to initiate legislation by petition through the local associations should be encouraged, and some form of referendum on contentious legislation should give the individual voter the last word on what is ultimately his own concern. Even at a still later stage Liberalism might protect the individual voter against the power of the State by the institution of an

Appeal Court, where, free of cost, the citizen could plead for redress against the unforeseen injustice of the bureaucrat or the legislator.

As long as the secret control of the machine, with its weapons of closure and Whip, and party funds and party discipline, fetters the tendency towards liberty that is inherent in Democracy, Liberalism will decline, and the individual will turn in despair to Socialist reaction. With the removal of these Conservative phenomena the fresh air of liberty will revive the spirit of Liberalism. It will then be worth while for the best type of men to choose politics as a career, for there will be work both in the constituency and on the back benches of the House of Commons worthy of the activities and energies of a free man. It will then be worth while for the individual voter to take a continuous interest in politics, since he will be able to influence events, and he will no longer be overwhelmed by that sensation of futility which is the nemesis of the organized party system. The need for scrapping the old machinery is greatly increased by its inability to function. The vast new electorate cannot be reached or influenced by the old political system, and a better moment could not be found for giving those who have the power the liberty to use it. But it is a question of principle more than of expediency. Liberalism, like Cæsar's wife, should be beyond suspicion. Not a shadow of a doubt should remain of its determination not to be

the servant of either Capital or Labor. We must be able to prove that Liberalism is the servant of humanity, not of a specific class, contrasting it with State Socialism that works for the supremacy of an intellectual bureaucracy and Guild Socialism that works for the supremacy of the Trades Unions. If Liberalism is to be the guide that will lead us towards increasing liberty, it must itself be free, or no one will believe in it. We need money and we need brains, but we must make it perfectly clear that we are not sold to the former, or controlled by the latter.

These proposals entail vast changes in the constitution and procedure of Parliament, as well as in the organization of the party itself, but every one of those changes from devolution downwards will be found to possess that tendency towards individual liberty which is the acid test of political progress. It cannot be maintained that the time is not ripe for such steps in evolution. The very fact of the low repute into which democratic politics has fallen is a proof that a vitalizing remedy is needed. The renewed health and vigor that will be the reward of so drastic a cure will enable Liberalism without fear or favor to be the just judge in the controversy between Capital and Labor. To protect both is the duty of statesmanship; to make clear to each in what degree they are suffering from their own selfishness, or on the other hand from the pressure of economic laws that cannot at present be ignored or

altered; to keep a watchful eye upon the increase and distribution of wealth, so that by temporary interference the former can be stimulated and the latter adjusted. There is no other alternative to the Conservative reaction of Socialism. The need for Liberalism will remain a constant factor in political history as long as men continue to desire freedom, for Liberalism alone holds out the promise of increasing individual liberty.

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